

RUSSIA
OF YESTERDAY
AND TO-MORROW

BARONESS SOUINY

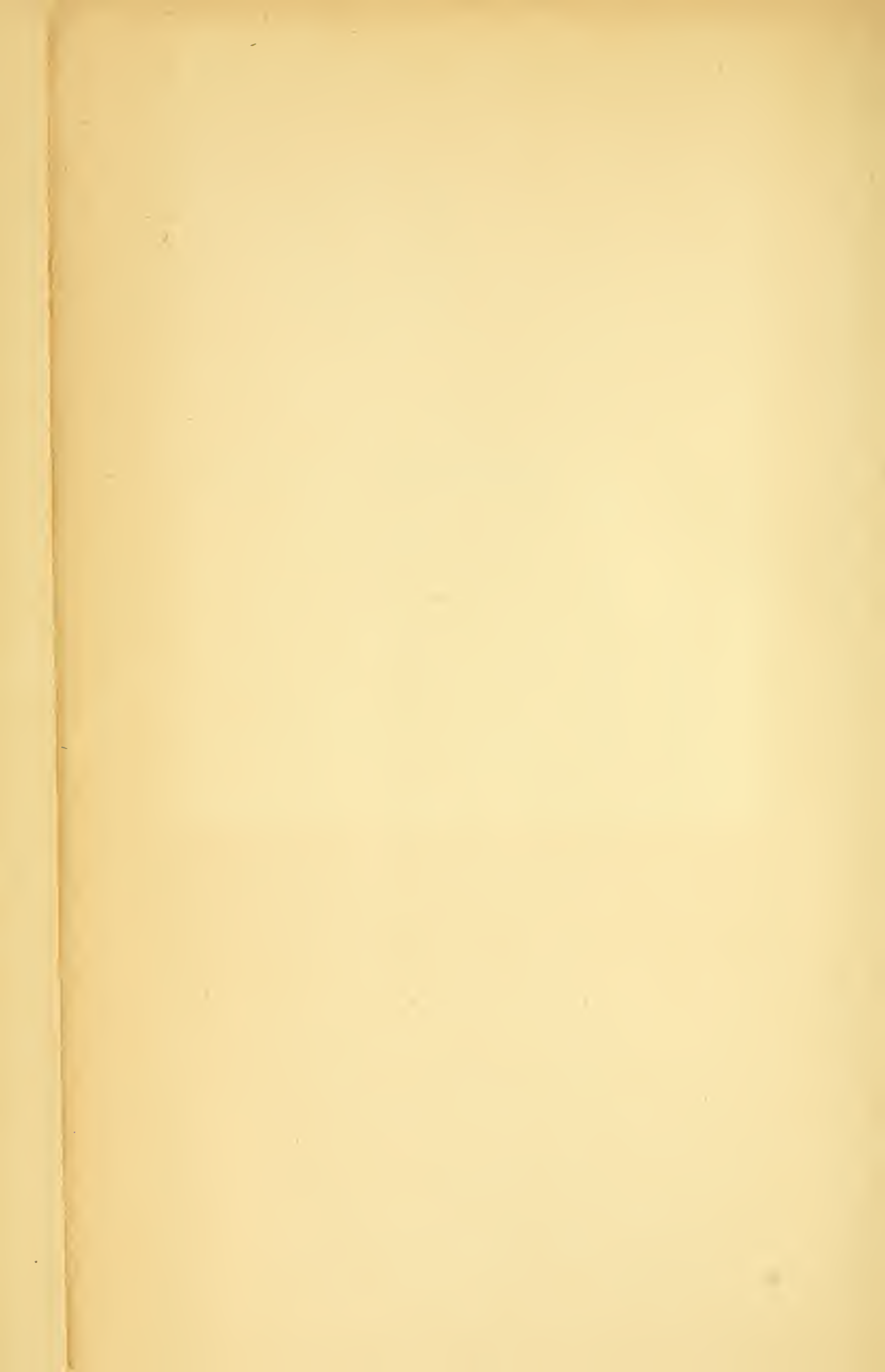


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AND TO-MORROW**



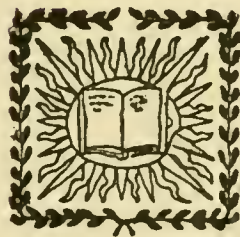
THE FORMER CZAR AND THE CZAREVITCH

Souiny-Seydlitz, Leonie Ida Philippine

RUSSIA OF YESTERDAY AND TO-MORROW

BY
BARONESS SOUINY

*ILLUSTRATED WITH
PHOTOGRAPHS*



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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO
AMERICA
THE GREAT DEMOCRACY

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RUSSIA OF YESTERDAY AND
TO-MORROW

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CHAPTER I

AWAKENING RUSSIA

THE idea of Russia as a mysterious country was maintained in a century of the telegraph and essential materialism, in a world accustomed to an open display of mankind's thoughts, feelings, and actions. This was the real mystery.

To enter Russia one had to cross the famous and dreaded frontier, which in a way was the shrewd invention of an imaginative government to make visitors shudder before its "almightiness." It is worth while to recall this inquisitorial institution, now possibly vanished forever, to those who have crossed the Russian border and to others who may be interested in the time when Russia was a country of the past.

From the first crossing of the frontier, the traveler found that the train crept into the

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station as if the slow turning of the wheels sang: "Take care! You enter Russia, the holy, the mysterious! It is not essential what your trunks contain; it is more essential what your mind contains. If you have any thoughts of freedom or any anti-governmental ideas hidden anywhere in your head or heart, be sure that they will be discovered by the hawk-like eyes of our police." Everybody who for the first time stepped over the Russian border has felt the disquieting conviction that he must be an anarchist at heart, and in his excited fancy has seen across the frontier the flaming sign, Siberia.

The train stopped. The tension grew during the enforced waiting in locked cars until a smiling friend—sometimes one made such a new friend and had become confidential with him—who had traveled in civilian clothes stepped out of his compartment fully equipped as a Russian general. He smiled, and winked out of the window, whereupon the door was suddenly thrown open, and two soldiers sprang forward with outstretched rifles. The passenger grew pale; the general smiled. It was only the tribute paid to his power to protect whom he wanted pro-

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tected or to arrest whom he wanted arrested. The protected ones marched between the two soldiers, just as the arrested ones marched, and handed out their passports with trembling fingers. They were then received by a colonel of the military police, who, bowing peaceably and smoking cigarettes, conducted them to a special waiting-room for guests of honor, where they fared sumptuously before they were finally led to the side of the station where their train stood. There an assiduous employee placed a carpeted bridge up to the car-steps, and the conductor relieved the traveler of all his hand-bags and settled him "paternally" in a large and comfortable compartment. The conductor returned again and again, anticipating every wish, bringing cushions, candlesticks, bed linen sealed in bags, and finally asked if the *barin* would like to drink something "enheartening."

That was for the protected one; but for those less fortunate it was quite another story. A gendarme in Cossack uniform, his chest beaded with cartridges, pierced the luckless traveler with suspicious eyes as he took his passports and sent him to the custom-hall. All the poor, traveling

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with their bundles, were huddled together in the middle of the place, while with trembling fingers they untied the ropes of their boxes or opened their willow baskets to display their possessions to the eagle eyes of the custom-officers. Cringing, and searching for copecks with which to worm themselves into the good graces of the officials, they waited like sheep until they were dismissed with a haughty gesture or with lamentations and protestations were compelled to pay some duty.

Another complication arose with the reading of passports. It was the special pleasure of the police official to complicate the simple duty of calling the names and handing back the papers. To the joy of most of the spectators, he pronounced the Jewish names with sneering suspicion. The poor victims advanced, bowing servilely, and the papers were shown to them, but withheld tantalizingly while the official conducted an inquisition. The poor Jew, perspiring, finally came to doubt his identity. He was sent before another official, who made him pay another ruble to get out of the hall.

The real mystery began with the arrival at the

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Russian capital. Hospitable, generous Russia bestowed unlimited personal and individual freedom on everybody. If one did not interfere with the sanctity of her policy, did not speak too much about freedom, one received all the freedom ever dreamed of. There was no bothering, no hurry, or no limitation. Everything was ready at any hour of the day, and this lack of system was neither peculiar nor strange; it was absolutely understood that everybody did as he pleased. There was no formality. Politeness existed only to make life as easy as possible. Most extravagant hospitality was showered on the stranger; he found himself in the midst of a Russian life so simple, so informal that he imagined himself as belonging to the nation, actually one of its children. The Russians talk so wonderfully, discourse so cleverly on philosophy and art, that every word seems frank, new, and interesting. Yet despite this apparent intimacy, despite this apparent understanding, after months or years the stranger was no nearer a real knowledge of the people than on the first day. It might happen that in an animated discussion a Russian, suddenly bored by the conventional smoothness

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of the conversation, would feel an unconquerable desire to utter insult, to spit words on the amazed stranger—words of cruel truth and disdain that opened the abyss between the Russian and the outer world. The Russian is eager to pursue everything to the end; he drains out the last drop from the foreigner's psychology. A free-masonry prevails among Russians, and no outsider will ever penetrate their spirit, their music, or the mysterious splendor of their Byzantine souls. Mystified, frightened, and enchanted at the same time, the foreigner remains in a permanent tension of mind, waiting for the rising of the curtain behind which he imagines the "great Russian truth" to be.

The director of the Russian state stage, the censor, hesitated many years to lift the curtain. A narrow opening recently revealed to the startled spectator the scene of a revolution in one dramatic act, in which the Romanoff dynasty was dragged from the throne. The representatives of the Duma, assembled on a platform around the empty throne, declared that Russia had become a democracy. Then the curtain fell, and the great plot was hidden again in the immensity

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of a land with a shuddering setting of coldness, of solitudes, where a wonder people breathe and live in unrealized hopes and expectations. Since the European War has brought the world within grasping distance of the Russian people—the good, strong, obedient masses—the idea has prevailed, with a mingling of shyness and hope, that Russia is awakening, that Russia is the land of the future.

The Russian people have been awakened by an event that has brought a new excitement into the war, which after nearly three years had become commonplace. That the czar could be dismissed as if he were a *tschinownik*, or under-official, that a few men, indifferent to the people yesterday, could hold Russia in their hands, were at first overwhelming thoughts. The masses do not reflect, and the man who gave the word to hoist the red flag was looked upon as so miraculous a hero that the people enthusiastically enjoyed each revolution-day, although on the next they might awake to the sober consideration of why they hoisted the flag of the people.

The “fundamental change,” as it is called, is not so fundamental as it appears. It is still a

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victory of the officials and not of the people. The men were not at home; they were fighting at the front for the old régime, which ordered the Great War. The people were not consulted. The new order of things was dictated, and the five heroes who started the revolution at the risk of their own lives depend on the good-will of the people. No one can imagine just what an awakening of the Russian people will prove to be. The millions of illiterates see in this awakening the wild intoxication of a liberty that could make short work with their superiors. This liberty could be cataclysmic, a terribly serious thing, an elemental thing that would shake Russia to its foundations.

Russian history never has faced facts. It has told only of tremendous greatness or tremendous baseness, which has helped to increase the world's curiosity. History elsewhere has shown with mathematical sureness the renewing, the development, of all the peoples of earth, as well as their downfall; but it is a most disturbing truth that history is not applicable to Russia.

Between Russia as it was and Russia as it will be lies the moral cleft of centuries. That means

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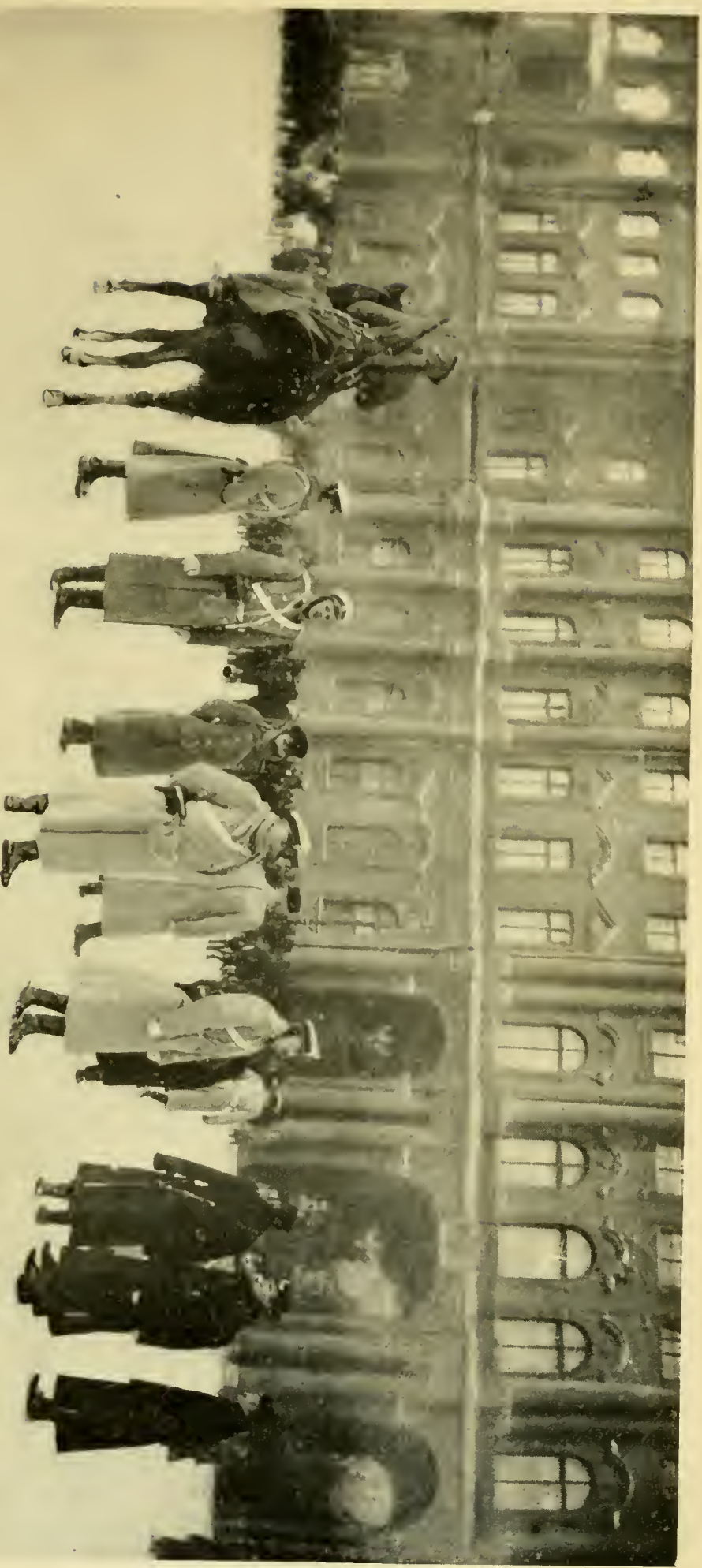
not the few men who awoke to a superhuman courage and activity,—they have always been in Russia; they have been alive in the anarchists, nihilists, and terrorists,—it means the people, the Russian masses, who were left in a state of primitiveness of mind and who have been reared with the poison of superstitious imagination. Enlightenment for the people was the lurking danger for czarism, for the church. Even when the individual *barin* was no longer permitted to lift the whip, the big knout of czarism and the church always swayed over the Russians. They did not walk straight and erect as other people walk; they crept along sleepily, dreamily, and it was only what they dreamed that was known to the outer world. Deeds were like the explosion of compressed forces, the electrical outburst of friction, occurring sporadically.

Previous upheavals in Russia have never led to logical evolution toward civilization. Yet out of the chaos of social, racial, and human problems had grown this world's colossus, the most menacing power in the European concert of nations. But the colossus was on a clay pedestal. It was an immense body whose members did not work

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organically, because the brain had not the capacity to coördinate. Events of the most horrid and tragic consequences—wars, revolutions—have convulsed from time to time one side of the body without the other side taking any part in them. People in the north of Russia have been kept in darkness about their brothers in the south. They have only the general ties of Slavism, without any knowledge of one another; yet through the whole enormous body flows one red stream of sacred Slavic blood. This war aroused this blood, brought the people together; Pan-Slavism was their sacred war-cry. Those of the north for the first time saw their brothers of the south; they sat side by side in the mud of the trenches, they learned to know one another, they had the same idioms, the same longing for home and children, the same sufferings, and they were dying side by side. They certainly were dying. By the hundred thousands, ruthlessly, recklessly, they were thrown into battle. Why not? Russia's human storehouse is inexhaustible.

Revolution, with its terrible nihilism, has been antipathetic to the world outside of Russia. It



BLOODY SUNDAY, WHEN THE ORDER WAS GIVEN TO THE SOLDIERS TO FIRE ON THE PEOPLE

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was not the sound earth in which a democracy could grow. Russia had to wait for a more optimistic expression through which to make herself understood to civilization. Only the war could bring about the solution of the Russian problem, the simple adherence of the masses to one single idea, to death or victory. Those two words contain the power to awaken a people. They gave strength to the strongest. The men facing death gained the courage to bring forth a new national life.

Nowhere else in the world have revolutions been of so fantastic a character and of so short duration as in Russia. The revolutions have told the most dramatic stories; they have always been the revolutions of individual men, the great cries of pained and suffering men and women who endured physical tortures to free their brethren from moral enslavement. They are the stories of the wildest, the most amazing courage of men who would fight bears without weapons. The physical and mental strain which led to the climax of the deeds of these martyrs was so terrible that they collapsed before their tasks were done, and

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all was in vain. Everybody sank back to the old slavery, and the heroic ones who were not sacrificed took their deception into exile.

Does not it sound like a fairy-tale, the story of the two young men who went to Kronstadt, the fortress within five miles of Petrograd, and organized the disorganized soldiers, who, singing "The Marseillaise," marched on a Sunday morning through the small streets of the fortress to the casino, where the officers were sitting at Sunday dinner? The commandant and his officers were frightened when they heard the soldiers singing and saw them marching, led by two men swinging the red flag. "Revolution!" was the paralyzing thought, and before the troops arrived at the casino, the officers had fled from the fortress in boats, to announce to Petrograd the terrible events taking place at Kronstadt. Not one shot was fired. But the imagination of the government officials was set on fire. The newspapers printed details of the most terrifying revolutionary movement, and nobody dared to approach the fortress.

In the meantime, while waiting for developments, the young revolutionists gave the soldiers

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a good time. Count Witte, who was then in power, sent Prince Dolgoruky to the fortress with a white flag. The two young heroes received the prince and dictated the conditions: the czar should proclaim freedom of speech and press, the people should send representatives to the imperial council, and the Duma should be established. The prince, gracefully dismissed by the youngsters, went back to Petrograd and remained there a few days, while the most fantastic reports about Kronstadt were spread in the capital. Meanwhile the people looked with timid admiration toward the fortress which stood mysterious and silent on the bank of the Neva. Again the prince returned to the fortress and was received by the two revolutionists, to whom he brought a document, signed by Count Witte, in which the czar granted all that had been asked. It was supposed that Kronstadt was full of revolutionists; and it was not imagined that the two leaders were absolutely alone in possession of the fortress, while the soldiers were enjoying their vacation tremendously. The two leaders kept Prince Dolgoruky for two days under guard, while they escaped over Finland to Sweden and

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thence to America, where one is still living.

The five leaders of new Russia, strong and sincere in their holy zeal, have forgotten the psychology of the people. The Russia of to-day is a democracy to the outside world and to the exiled, but not to the people. And this is the pessimistic undertone that stifles all joy for the wonderful change in Russia. In this revolution the people as a whole were not the inspiring element. The few at home had their share in it—the excitement of killing, of threatening to enter the houses of the nobles, which had been forbidden sanctuaries to them. They could arrest ministers, high court officials, the czar himself. Finally they raised the red flag on the historic Winter Palace of the czar, where the great Catharine, the people's idol, once lived. Moreover, the holy synod, the great, mysterious power of the church, was disrobed of its sanctity, was exposed in its nakedness; its head, the "Little Father," was disgraced.

Despite the tremendous deed of the five heroes of new Russia the revolution was not eruptive enough. It was too hesitating. First, the czar's

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abdication was demanded in favor of the czarévitch, with Michael as regent. Then, when the czar had also abdicated for his son, Michael was asked to accept the throne; and after Michael, who was unwilling to pay the debts of the dynasty with his head, declined, the new rulers wavered in their resolution to have no throne at all. There was the weak point. They were not organized. They were resourceful, but they were not ready to remove all the old machinery of government. Instead of consigning the royal robe of czarism to a historical museum and draping the young republic with the ermine of power, crowning it with the fresh enthusiasm of the people who had helped to destroy the throne, the leaders made mistakes they could not help making because they, too, like the people, were Russians. Their wonderful mentality, overdeveloped on one side, lacked systematic training. Unfortunately, it was not a time for mistakes. In the first few days of hesitation, of vain promises impossible to fulfil, it was easy to lose what might never be regained. The Russian people are like children. Take away

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their doll, and they must have another plaything to replace it, to hold their attention.

The first signal of the new epoch in Russia was the killing of Rasputin, the peasant. A nobleman killed him. It had been hammered into the people's minds that Rasputin was the criminal who had brought the country to the edge of an abyss. The peasants hated Rasputin; they were never proud of his glory when he lived. He had no right to live like a prince in a palace; he was no better than they. Why should a man who had tramped through the villages, a sectarian who had followers among the idle, a man who could neither read nor write, exercise such power? They could not imagine that it was the power of all of them that Rasputin daringly represented as a contrast to the weakened forces of the nobles. But Rasputin was dead; murdered by a nobleman. In their minds it was not the business of a nobleman to kill a peasant. Rasputin should have been judged by his own. They would have killed him, too, if he was guilty of being a traitor to holy Slavism.

Rasputin is dead, and the people will begin to defend the peasant, even though, as they said, he

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had misled the czar and the czarina and had taken away vodka in an hour when it was most needed to help the people in their distress. Rasputin is dead, and that they do not have vodka they will finally understand to be a good thing; instead of vodka they now have money in the savings-banks, enough to buy food for their families. But food cannot be bought even with all the money that their sons fighting at the front have sent home to them. And the money cannot buy back their slain children; it cannot restore their crippled. Rasputin is dead, the Duma has punished even the czar; but the scarcity of food still prevails, the sons are not coming home, the enemy is still on Russia's soil. Where are the promised wonders?

The five leaders of the revolution are the living torch flaming in the ashes of old Russia's hopes—the torch which scorched despotism, and must be kept burning by the breath of the people. Those who risked their lives as well as the lives of the soldiers to transform Russia fundamentally have the fault of their race, the sinister fault of the Slavs—fanaticism, blind, tenacious fanaticism. They may exult in this fanaticism, which

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gave the elemental strength of a Hercules or a Samson, which made them start a revolution; but they must do great things to sustain the suggestion of invincibility. They must have the magic force to change the Tatar into a European, not giving time to the Tatar to ask the primitive question: If it was possible to dethrone a czar, in whose name good and bad were done to the people, in whose name will things be done now? And if all will be done in the name of the people, then every man has the right to make demands. Like children annoying their parents and teachers, they will ask much and tirelessly. And what of the church wonders? When the Little Father, the czar, could be sent away, and no other czar took his place, can God be sent away, too? Thousands of illiterates will begin to think, to move, to ask their rights; and the wonder-work of the five who have forgotten how many centuries it requires to educate a people to the balanced state of mind for a democracy, is in serious danger.

Despite all the efforts of the Government of former Russia, most of the people again and again refused to obey the imperative command

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to industrialize their energies. They were artisans or peasants; comparatively few were working-men in factories. Now they will be forced into the modern rut; they will become like the common people of the other countries, a disgruntled result of industrialism, victims of the machine. Worse than this, Russians will be a dull people without the foreigners' mechanical efficiency, deprived of their own native imagination, divorced from the mystical shyness of their religion, and in misunderstanding struggle with their new rulers. Their conception of life and happiness is so different from that of other nations that it cannot be understood by an American mind. Their joy partakes of an indolence which has nothing to do with the *dolce far niente* of the children of the sun, nor is it the fateful nirvana or kismet of Oriental peoples. It is a bodily and mental indolence coupled with a restless and yearning soul eager for its redemption.

The climate has influenced the Russian. The long nights and the frightful cold have increased his dreamy laziness. A warm stove, the family crowded together in one room, the boiling, comforting samovar, an ikon under a little burning

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lamp, meditation upon the abstractions of life—this is all that he has asked from his saints. In this primitive uniformity his spirit has developed into one single touching quality—patience. There is a great power in patience that fast-living people can hardly understand. It stores up vast possibilities. Patience has caused the simple Russian to create wonders of art comparable with the masterpieces of Benvenuto Cellini. The illiterate peasant has been happy in his own way, and it will be a tragedy for him when he is forced suddenly to live a life dictated by the will of others.

It will be the greatest fight for the new rulers to accustom Russian children to regular school-work. Parents will revolt at the idea of having children taught things which are all right for the masters. And the children who learn how to read and to write will grow up to revolt against the world. The patience that the parents had, no longer existing with the children, will be replaced in the new generation by the self-destroying urge of anarchism, which will revenge lost, happy, primitive conditions by turning on society.

In former Russia the poor felt less poor, less

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humiliated than in other countries. True, they seldom rose, they seldom left their original status. The Russian people were strongly divided in the classes which are mentioned by the laws; nobility, clergy, burgesses, merchants, artisans, and peasants. And these classes again were strongly divided in inherited and personal nobility, in privileged burgesses and burgesses; but in practice only the nobility and the peasantry had clearly defined rights and obligations that gave to these two groups distinct class character.

The peasants confided their rights to the nobility. This was the original idea of the foundation of the zemstvos. The peasantry was the first to have representatives for its interests in the council. But the number of representatives was fixed by a special law in a manner to secure predominance for the representatives of the nobility; in very few district zemstvos have the peasants had the preponderance. Even in this strong and broad-minded institution of Russia that Alexander II founded in 1864 the land-owning nobles had great power, and the peasants had to submit to their decisions.

Autocracy was the sun around which every-

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thing circled. Blindly the people accepted it. It was an established, a tested idea, and the crown was necessary to this fantastic figure, which embodied the magnificence of the Slavic imagination. The conception of the czar was absolutely inseparable from the Russian picture. The new rulers must have something great in store to replace the superstition of majesty that was deep in the people's soul.

Russia is struggling with her noblest forces out of the century-old mysticism and nightmare cruelties to the light of humanity. Five men, among them one who has been a martyr for freedom, will help the country in these trying days. They will dictate, they will condemn, and they will judge.

CHAPTER II

THE MILITARY PARTY

THREE years ago, at one of the resplendent balls of the Club de la Noblesse, a foreign attaché, overwhelmed by the brilliant coloring, looked around the vast ball-room, and watched the entry of a great grand duke with his suite, together with numerous little grand dukes, garbed in scarlet and gold or green and gold, their swelling chests covered with decorations, and with diamond-glittering orders suspended about their necks on orange, black, or red ribbons.

Music trumpeted the sharp rhythms of the polonaise, and the dancers, solely young officers with their noble young ladies, advanced couple by couple.

“One would suppose Russia to be a military state,” remarked the attaché. “Uniforms everywhere. Do they mean merely show or do they denote a new spirit for greater preparedness?”

Who would ever reply to a diplomat? In

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Russia variegated uniforms always have been preferred to dull black-and-white evening clothes, which do not differentiate a gentleman from his lackey. In training for the army the youths of Russia's higher set were following their sense of patriotic duty, and their love of distinguishing themselves from the bureaucratic classes through bravery and elegance. It was unthinkable that a young aristocrat should be other than an officer, one of the splendidly trained bodyguards or one of the highly admired convoys. It was playing with arms without a deep consciousness of its terrible significance, and the uniform did not impose so great a degree of importance as in some countries, notably Germany, where it necessitates on the part of officers rigid rules and restrictions.

In Russia a uniform is not sacred; it is seen everywhere, even at night in the gay restaurants and cabarets, and did not prevent an old general, with all his decorations on the breast, from being present in such a place and carrying a beautiful young girl in his arms like a baby, gaily feeding her from a bottle not containing milk! On the contrary, the uniform in Russia protects its

THE MILITARY PARTY

wearer from his extravagances, which are indulgently tolerated because he *is* an officer.

Perhaps beneath the surface there was a deep meaning in this frivolity on the part of Russia's army men. Perhaps they had a premonition of the tragedy to come. The play became bitter reality. Alas! all those who lived and waltzed in buoyancy and superabundance of spirits, alert and slim in their regimentals, are dead! The same trumpets that once blared the polonaise now play for them the Danse Macabre.

On reflection, it is as if a new military idea was behind that pomp and glitter; as if a new consciousness was born in the youth of the country, who felt the responsibility of the debt they owed their native land—a debt contracted in the Russo-Japanese War, lost through the ridiculous arrogance of its leaders.

They went forth arbitrarily, every man a general, convinced that the little yellow men of the little antiquated island would furnish them game for a hunting-trip, to be brought back like bears. They even formed regiments independently. Like ancient highwaymen, getting permission from the czar, they went down to the River Don,

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where the Cossacks lived, and equipped their men fantastically, and adventurously started forth. All the distractions of the capital followed; Mukden and Port Arthur became a kind of Coney Island.

Incredible as it seems, even the *grandes dames* were allured by the adventure, following with their servants, building amateur hospitals, and hampering the Red Cross by good-natured confusion, by their dilettantism and unfitness for the serious task.

The provisions sent to the front never reached their destination. The story of the Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, who collected half a million rubles to buy boots for the soldiers, was one of the most notorious. The official to whom the train carrying those longed-for articles was confided held auction-sales at every big station! From far and near people came to profit by this rare occasion to buy cheap boots, till, when the train finally reached Mukden, the soldiers, eagerly opening those cars, found only empty boxes!

Ah! the unpardonable sins of Port Arthur!

Instead of bagging their game, the Russians

THE MILITARY PARTY

put their feet into the wolf-traps of efficiency that the Japanese had set in their strong, mathematical, modern warfare. Port Arthur was encircled, starved; the hunters took the next Siberian express home, deserting their men.

Russia's youth learned that the Japanese War was the blackest spot in the military history of the nation. They felt that they must wash it clean when the next occasion arose.

A military spirit haunted the young officers; the military party was its result, started first by a few whose ambitions were awakened, and who had learned that the time was past when other nations could be frightened by the acrobatic ability and the wild aspect of the Cossacks. The military party grew and grew and became mighty. The Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch headed it. From Bulgaria he brought Radka Dimitrieff, a general who was his adviser in the modern training of the army. And as no party ever was created without becoming hungry for deeds and losing its sense of proportion, it not only "prepared," but longingly and fanatically sought an opportunity for action.

Nicholas's first army act was to gather masses

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of soldiers at the Austrian border, apparently not for a short manœuver, but as a permanent institution. The soldiers irritated and provoked with their idle observation the Austrian soldiers who were at the frontier in pursuance of duty.

This was in September, 1913. Critical days followed. A clash with Austro-Hungary seemed inevitable, especially in the light of the unsettled Balkan questions. The news was alarming.

Nicholas passionately worked upon the czar to declare war against Austria; but the czar, thanks to the president of the ministry, Kokowzow, a peace man, who had not much faith in Nicholas's organization, and to Rasputin, stood steadfast. By special messenger the old Emperor of Austria sent a letter in his own handwriting to the czar imploring him to prevent war between the two nations.

Every one was convinced that the dangerous tension was past. Life went daily on its accustomed course; on the surface all seemed serene. Behind the scenes, however, feverish preparations began. Nicholas secretly worked his machinations. He paid visits to the Balkans, where his father-in-law, the King of Montenegro, who was

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always delighted to fish in troubled waters, inflamed his ambitions for the Russian throne. But the Russian crown was not to be gained by Nicholas even through a cleverly plotted assassination of the czar. There were other pretenders. The King of Montenegro slyly suggested that the only road to an overpowering popularity for his son-in-law was to become a war hero! The secret heart's desire of the grand duke was fed by Mr. Iswolsky, the Russian ambassador in Paris. It was the same Iswolsky about whom the representatives of other powers said that it was repugnant to sit at the same table with him. He longed to revenge a personal matter that went back to the time when he led the foreign affairs in Austria. Despite his resistance and the interposed interests of Russia, Count Berchthold, the former Austrian prime minister, made a *coup d'état* by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which Austria fostered for more than twenty years. Iswolsky was dismissed for the failure of his mission, and made a vow to revenge this incident and his personal offended vanity.

He stirred up the fire of continuing and in-

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creasing misunderstandings between the nations when the Balkan questions were discussed in Paris, and awoke in every diplomat the unpleasant dread of a poison spider which is only waiting for the proper moment to throw the cobwebs of its miserable intrigues over Europe. And so it was. How far his personal influence went in the plot of Serajewo history perhaps will reveal. Rubbing his hands, with a wide smile on his broad, unpleasant face, he exclaimed when the declaration of war was made public in Paris, "That's my little war!"

Promenading in the sunshine of Bordeaux, enjoying life, he proudly entertained whoever cared to listen with a recitation of the result of his diplomatic slyness, while his brothers were slaughtered by the million for the trick he played on Austria.

The earth was prepared; the seed was planted. It was easy enough to accelerate events which would shake Austria to action; to buy subjects in Serbia, to murder the Crown Prince of Austria. The first blood was shed, and its odor was as a contagion, poisoning the excited minds of the people. War was in the air; everything breathed



GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS

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forth war. Nicholas Nicolaiévitch became the hero of the hour.

He changed the whole system in one day. He, the general-in-chief of the army, commanded everything, everywhere. No longer was there the ministerial power of yesterday; the Duma's opinion no longer counted. There was only Nicholas. With him or against him? To be against him was to be summarily executed. He commanded the palace of the czar. The czar himself was considered only a necessary figure-head. He was locked up in the palace without being allowed to see one of his old advisers. The document, the declaration of war, lay on his desk for him to sign. In his heart's depression he stipulated with Nicholas to see Prince Scheremetzeff, his oldest and most sincere friend, after which he would sign the fateful paper.

On the morning of July 31 he sent for his old friend, the prince. The czar's message never reached the prince; that very morning he was found dead in his bed.

The czar was broken by this news. He saw not only his power strangled, but his own person. When the grand duke entered with the ministers

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and the generals of the great staff, the czar stood erect, deadly pale, and set his name upon the death-sentence of the people for the second time during his reign. Nicholas Nicolaiévitch had triumphed. The excitement of the people was tremendous. Vodka flowed in streams for the lower classes, and champagne for the higher. There followed a week-long madness and intoxication. The sight of the grand duke brought about an artificially heightened enthusiasm amounting to a paroxysm. The day was his.

He returned to his palace and summoned the generals, and they sped in gala attire to pay their tribute to the victor to be. The entire staff waited in the imposing reception-room; the sunlight floated through the high windows, reflecting prism-like the gold-and-bejeweled uniforms of those representatives of the high Russian war council. Imposing in their appearance, convinced of their own greatness and indispensability, they stood in rows, expectancy on their faces and in their hearts, hoping that in the next room a rich buffet would reward them for their heavy task.

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The door flew open, and the grand duke entered, tall and slim, towering over all others. He glanced at them with haughtiness, cold resolution in his eyes. He was accompanied by his private adviser, the Bulgarian general. He paused in front of the assembled staff and said in a voice which whistled through the air like a whip:

“I merely wish to say to you that any one who steals will be hanged.”

Thus he spoke, then turned, and left the room, the lobster-red generals remaining behind. The audience was over. Nicholas had in his generals eighteen bitter enemies the more, who, instead of being his supporters, were to become his curse.

Why will the Russians never be victorious? A little incident like this, with its overbearing impertinence and conceit of the born autocrat, will forever disturb Russia's path to conquest. What Nicholas did to his direct subordinates each does to those beneath him in revenge for his own humiliation, and to exercise his power over others. So on down to the lowest soldier, the higher always uses the whip over the lower, while he cringes before his own superior.

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It is the eternally vicious circle. Every one studies the weak points of the man above him, and plays upon them with bribes of every variety. With a few exceptions all are selfish egotists, not working for the national cause, but for their own aggrandizement.

Nicholas thought that his iron fist could enforce discipline. He punished pitilessly the smallest mistakes. His flatterers made capital out of this, and sought out other men's errors and reported them to him. Without any distinction as to rank he punished, whipping with his own hands generals who had lost battles. And they lost, lost constantly. He dismissed the serious ones, putting new, unfit, and inexperienced men into high positions as leaders. Never did he alter his own omnipotent ideas, but regarded himself as a war god, sacrificing to his own stubborn belief in his infallibility the best blood of the nation.

They *were* well prepared, the proudest regiments imaginable. The flower of Russian youth had rushed into the first battles with high enthusiasm, and with the determination to show to the world how the youth of Russia would win the

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war. All are buried in the swampy lakes of Masuren, the hope, the pride of their country.

All of the young, trained officers were killed, and there were no others to replace them. The officers of the reserve, who had had only one year of training, were put into places of responsibility and sent to the front as leaders. After six weeks' training students were given rank and sent to lead the soldiers.

What were the consequences of this military hodge-podge? Generals were dismissed, and some of them were sent to Siberia; others committed suicide, and the grand duke himself was shot at by two officers. General Sievers shot at him when he raised his famous whip, but failed. Another young officer, the adjutant of the general who lost the fortress at Brest-Litovski, in bringing the news to the grand duke was slapped in his face. Not willing to endure this humiliation, he took his revolver, and wounded the grand duke in his arm. With a second bullet he killed himself.

Instead of acknowledging those terrible mistakes, Nicholas hissed and with each lost battle saw only the vanishing of his personal ambition.

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Nevertheless he still remained the war god for those at home. They dreamed of Russia's unlimited extension. They had only to cross the Black Sea to Constantinople, and capture Austria and Hungary, to open the door to the Balkans from the other side. On the day when the fortress Przemyśl was taken the Russian capital prepared a celebration for Nicholas, as if the war's decision had already rung for victorious Russia.

In the procession after the solemn service at the cathedral, under the shadow of the conquered flags, Nicholas marched alone, triumphant. In front of him marched the slim little czar, who, serious and worried, glanced at the cheering people. His poor people! He bent his head, and let Nicholas have all the credit. He knew better; he knew the inside history, and at what a price this single victory had been bought, and he decided that very day to remove this pitiless, aspiring figure, his uncle Nicholas Nicolaiévitch.

Still unaware, Nicholas returned to headquarters. The enemy prepared the great drive into Poland, chasing the grand duke's soldiers before them. Nicholas's star grew paler and

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paler, and was extinguished forever when the immense fraud of one of his creatures, Sukhomlinoff, the minister of war, was revealed to the czar.

In the first year of the war vast stores of ammunition and equipment were squandered, and the regiments were deprived of the necessities for continuing the fighting. In blind rage Nicholas ordered the unspeakable stratagem of throwing the weaponless soldiers into the first firing-line. There is no other war in history in which such cold-blooded cruelties were committed as those that the grand duke forced on the Russian people.

With his medieval conceptions, he built his false sovereignty on top of the writhing bodies of men; but it was washed away by the floods of the shamelessly shed blood and the tears of all the mothers who sent their sons to fight for the beloved country.

The czar dismissed Nicholas as the general-in-chief of all the armies, appointing himself to this position, and sent Nicholas to the obscurity of the Caucasus. There he will have time and leisure to awake from his dream to the consciousness of

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his sins, for which he will have to answer before the High Judge, not having been sentenced on earth.

The spy and traitor stories which every war brings forth are nowhere so exciting, so incredible, and so tragic as in Russia. Traitors are always found in high positions, with no other aim than greed for money. Plans worked out in the Russian general staff brought one of the greatest victories to the enemy wholly on the basis of those plans. This gave to the enemy the greatest advantage. The investigation was confided to Colonel D——, who was one of the most reliable men in the whole army. He was for many years a colonel at the German-Russian frontier, and was well known and decorated for his tact, his discipline and his clever knowledge of German activities. It was he who helped the army cross the frontier at a point where the Germans never expected it. It was he who directed the first little invasions into East Prussia; and it was he who was also courteously asked by the Germans not to destroy the kaiser's hunting-lodge, Romin-ten, where before the war he had often been the kaiser's guest.



A. Braussilow
1916

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It was amazing; nobody could explain it. How could the enemy get hold of those plans, elaborated to the last detail?

It is the eternal psychology of overdoing cleverness and of sleeping surety. The colonel felt himself so safe that he neglected prudence; suspicion turned on him. He was called to headquarters, which did not disquiet him, as that happened often enough, and without the least presentiment he entered the room of the grand duke. He was arrested on the spot in so brutal a manner that he lost his exterior calmness, marvelously guarded for years, and falling on his knees, he cried for mercy, promising to deliver all the officers who took part in the immense intrigue that betrayed the country and caused a great loss of life.

Grace was promised him, and he named the young officers, all his subordinates. Thirty were arrested.

In his trial he protested against his arrest, because he fooled the enemy in selling antiquated plans, never practicable for the Russians, because the Germans had entirely changed the roads, one of Hindenburg's tricks.

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Nevertheless he was hanged, with his thirty poor subordinates. All those who have passed the frontier will remember the elegant, polite man, liked by every one. The man and the frontier have disappeared forever.

After the dismissal of Nicholas, the czar showed a personal activity and an intrepidity which deeply impressed his people. Recruits drawn from the remotest parts of Russia, who had imagined their czar, but never personified this holiest of their fictions, were presented to him as his troops, and heard his voice, really a simple human voice, which spoke fatherly words to them and blessed them. In such an hour the Russian people were willing to be cut in two for their "Little Father."

Despite mismanagement and demoralization on the part of the leaders, the soldiers have accomplished wonders in bravery and self-sacrifice. Here and there a military light has shone through the darkness of ignorance and consciencelessness, and thus far conditions have been far better under the czar's own command. A fine man like General Brusiloff had been suppressed in the first period of the war. But what

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can the finest mind achieve in the field when everything in the background is inefficiency? Although the administration started with the best intentions, as in the other fighting countries, to organize ammunition plans and offices for emergencies and investigations, thorough disorganization resulted. The officials were unfit, lazy, and without any comprehension of the tremendous fact that the big wheel of state must stop if the least tiny bit of machinery slips a cog. They always supposed that the loosening of a small screw would never be noticed, and when the whole mechanism suddenly stopped no one could find where the difficulty lay.

The same naïveté of perception regarding the needs of the soldiers was obvious when the word was given out that the men badly needed underwear. A great collection was arranged by the women, and the articles freely and generously contributed included innumerable silk, lace-trimmed nightgowns and underwear—elegant women's trousseaux!

For years the leaders have prepared minutely at the green table the most exact plans and maps for war. They could not fail, for the reckoning

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was right. Their reigments really were wonderfully trained and of wonderful physique; their military storehouses were filled with the best and richest war material. All was done in the best style possible; nowhere were there petty economies; whatever modern warfare had invented was bought up by the Russians; and they went to the front a proud train of fully equipped, self-conscious, and brave men. The men are artists in building trenches and fortifications. They are blindly obedient, they are patient, and they are sober. They are healthy and can endure hardships.

The decisive moment arrives, and they fail; the machine does not work. How explain this? And how is it that when the failure is often explained and made clear, the mistakes are committed over and over again?

Imagine the legions of men who were consecrated to help make Russia victorious in this campaign! The enemy, when numerically exhausted, was sometimes forced to yield and withdraw before this wall of human bodies. All in vain. In the end they lost their position.

“Misfortune,” they sighed in Archangel,

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“blew up all the ammunition just arrived from America.” In America “bad luck” blew up the immense factories that were molding their guns. Was it also misfortune that in an American factory fifty million cartridges ordered by a Russian commissioner after a special design, when virtually ready for delivery, were discovered by another Russian inspector to be unfit for Russian rifles and to be made after a German pattern? The cartridges would have found their way over Russia into German rifles if circumstances had not led to the commissioner’s removal. American genius invented a machine to destroy the cartridges, and after the necessary delay caused by the criminal official they were made over for use by the Russians. The railroad from Archangel is not yet ready in the third year of war, and whole trains of ammunition simply disappear en route, never arriving at all. The staff sit in their headquarters and paint battles on the maps, while the poor devils of soldiers have to face the bullets of their adversaries.

Of what use the military spirit, the military party? Words!

When the drawing-card of the military party

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failed, they spread the idea of a rebirth of the time of Napoleon, and told to the people that the enemy had been let into the gates of Russia, to be caught at the decisive moment, as was Napoleon's great army before Moscow. When this moment would arrive naturally no one could know. After this fiction became outworn, the fata Morgana of the Dardanelles in the blue distance, was shown the people; and, as the *pièce de résistance*, the Turks would be swallowed by Russia's immensity.

It was evident that the Russian is a conqueror and not a soldier, that preparedness and military parties never will make one of him. The famous cossack is nowadays a vanquished glory. He is lost in modern warfare, being used only to bring about terror and fright among the inhabitants of occupied places. The Russian's whole nature struggles against military discipline; he is a fanatic, he is courageous, and he is fatalistic, and he loves to gamble with his life. He invented the spectacle of the alluring war-play, the daring races and horseback riding, to tame the wildness which from time to time boiled in his blood and cried for an outlet.

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The fairy-tale of an inexhaustible supply of men still prevails, without any realization of the crude truth that mere men, without thoroughly trained officers, are a phantasmagory; and that the more men taken, the fewer are left at home for providing for those who are in the field.

The Government of old Russia sat in a terrible network of inconsistencies, and as the ministers saw that the people at home, who had given their strong, healthy youngsters, were awaking from their dull obedience to the point of asking why and were beginning to revolt, they hurried the czar to the conviction that he must make a separate peace. They used the influence of Rasputin, who preached against war, and the czar, finding himself weakened, grasped the idea and lent his ear to the propositions which were brought before him by his own ministers, who may have been back of the peace appeal of the kaiser, made known in 1916. But those who are to-day the leaders of young Russia were in the opposition and strongly at work, and so strongly and so cleverly that the main points of the peace overtures were never discussed before the Duma,

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because of the accusations that the members hurled at the head of the Government. Blinded, the ministers thought first of their own safe retreat, and no one was diplomatic enough to discover what lay behind the military inactivity.

When the czar, arrested, uttered the exclamation that he was betrayed, he spoke the truth. He was betrayed. The generals who had surrounded him were allied with the democratic party, and the warnings of the various grand dukes had never made any impression on him, because he knew that each of them would have taken the opportunity to become the autocrat of all the Russias. The czar was a Romanoff and knew all about the Romanoffs. He was long dethroned before the actual physical removal. It did not best serve the outcome of the war that Russia should suddenly walk her own way toward peace, and it could not be the moral result of the war, which has swallowed so much of the best of all countries, that there could be a separate understanding, which would be only a latent danger.

Humanity cried for peace, but humanity had to save mankind from future disasters. The war

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had gone too far; it was no longer the question of a nation. It was a cataclysm that shook the world, and the end had to be logically annihilating for one side or the other. It was no longer the war party; it was no longer Mr. Iswolsky who held the fate of the Russians in hand. It was the highest ethical command that had to save Russia and the world from further medieval enterprises of ennobled highwaymen. It was autocracy in every form, which had to be uprooted through the war, and then all the dead, all the martyrs, all the greatness of the people's sacrifice, would be justified.

With young Russia are the iron will and the good faith that will perhaps take the place of skill and training. The enemy is on the soil, deep in Russian territory, and he will make further advance; he will threaten the capital. All this perhaps will happen because the enemy still believes that the war must end in his own military victory.

It is to the highest credit of the Russians that they are not soldiers by nature, and that they will be the first to help to annihilate a profession which brings about the destruction of mankind.

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Let them return to the conquests of more peaceful achievements; let them discover their own country. What space for the wildest sport, activity, and self-sacrifice!

CHAPTER III

UNBALANCED POLICIES

THE five heroes of new Russia who restored the country from sickening conditions of state and court corruption to the sound healthiness of a clean democracy discharged not only the czar, the passive cause of all the unhappiness and misery in Russia, but discharged every man connected with the old régime. They filled the prisons, from which the political prisoners of former Russia were released, with ministers and courtiers whom they regarded as offenders against the people.

The shadow of Stolypin, the reactionary prime minister who succeeded Witte, appears as introducing the last political tragedies which led up to war and to the victorious entry of young Russia.

After Stolypin, assassinated, had expired in his arms in the foyer of the grand opera house in Kieff, Kokovtsoff, who then was the minister of finance, took up the labor of prime minister.

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In January, 1914, Kokovtsoff was to celebrate his tenth anniversary as minister of finance. The invitations to the banquet were sent out, the commemoration medal was ordered, when, without warning, the prime minister received the ominous imperial letter, in which the czar gracefully accepted Kokovtsoff's resignation, indispensable to the recovery of his health! The title of count was bestowed on him as a little balm for his wounds, and he was offered three hundred thousand rubles from the imperial treasure, which Kokovtsoff "gratefully" refused. Kokovtsoff was petrified, and with him all those who understood the meaning of this indication of a new undercurrent, the military party. What might not have been prevented if Kokovtsoff, the fine, scholarly man, with his sensibility and kindliness, with his inflexibility toward all flatterers, and with his clean record, had retained the leadership both as premier and minister of finance!

An atmosphere of peace and slow, systematic progress was about him. There was no disturbance when Kokovtsoff had any matter of business in his hands; there was a quiet certainty that he would always drive the state carriage back to its

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right track. Russia's often depressing political anxieties were moored to rest in the calm port of his conscientiousness. It was simply marvelous what this man accomplished. His task included, besides the national finances, which worked like well-oiled machinery with Davidoff as chief engineer, the great political burden of being premier, the crux of all Russian statesmanship, and the supervision of the department of customs.

During the ten years of his service he improved the Russian finances to a point of amazing stability. He cleared the Augean stable of irregularities, and discarded relentlessly the officials who had established a flourishing trade in concessions and claims, which legally only the prime minister could confer. Most of the high functionaries had hated Kokovtsoff for his stubborn deafness to the usual custom of granting opportunities to all kinds of high-place corruptionists, and his dismissal was greeted in certain circles as a relief, and aroused the hope that the good old times when the ministers closed one eye, and in exceptional cases both, would come again.

Public opinion attributed the minister's downfall to his financial system, which was funda-

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mentally wrong. The state's cash-box had been filled by the abuse of the people's preference for vodka. The Government held the monopoly of all the vodka distilleries, so of course the state did not interfere with the appetites of the people. As it was sanctioned by the Government, the people would not believe that vodka was their curse, their certain ruin, and the state profited by the drunkenness of her misled children. Public opinion forgot that Kokovtsoff, in selling vodka, did not create a new situation; that he simply took the monopoly out of the hands of private persons, who had enriched themselves through the people's scourge.

This was the reproach and criticism of Kokovtsoff at a time when Rasputin intrigued against the prime minister. Rasputin never forgave Kokovtsoff for energetically protesting against his meddling in governmental affairs. On the other hand, Rasputin was the instrument used by the military party to get rid of Kokovtsoff, who was determined to preserve peace and to maintain friendly relations with Germany.

Kokovtsoff retired to private life, and Russia's new régime, instead of seeking counsel of the lit-

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tle man with the intelligent face and mild expression on his noble features who had been able to give the Government a temporary equilibrium, put him in jail.

The man who had helped to undermine Kokovtsoff's position in 1914 was Count Witte. He hoped that his hour had again come to replace the prime minister or in any case, to prevent the choice of a new man. He was strongly with the party of the Grand Duke Nicholas; but he forgot those who at that moment wanted no minister's influence in the czar's environment.

As a fallen star, Count Witte, thrown from the sky of political constellations, roamed restless in Russia's politics. The people looked with a kind of amazed enmity at this ghost of a time of Russia's rapid development—a development which had proved to be only a card-house built by Witte and blown down by the Russo-Japanese War. Over-anxious to regain the czar's favor, his unremitting efforts to play the general adviser in actual politics always split on the fact that he had sold Russia to Germany in those unfortunate commercial treaties of 1907. Those treaties were like an abyss along which all the

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ministers trod, afraid to look into its depths, each of them knowing that it would never be spanned without victims. The renewal of the treaties before the outbreak of the war was a source of ever-present apprehension.

The great national events of the end of July, 1914, the beginning of the war, caused the Russians to forget old animosities for a while. Count Witte breathed more freely; again the time had come when he was heard and his influence was felt.

After the disaster of Poland, after the failure of Gallipoli, Witte worked feverishly to bring about a separate peace, knowing that it was the secret desire of the czar, who was shaken by the loss of his best regiments and near relatives.

The military party saw itself in danger, and decided that Count Witte's earthly existence was no longer desirable. He died suddenly.

The life of Count Witte is a strange story of justified ambition and back-stairs romance, a genuine Russian story conceived in the brain of a woman.

Matilda, later his wife, was first married to a subordinate official of the ministry. Her house

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was open not only to the comrades of her husband, but especially to the aristocratic set, which through family ties and duties was close to the court. Matilda was equipped with the penetrating intellect of the Russian Jewess and was the center of this famous coterie. One simply went to Matilda. There was a coming and going without formality; a free intoxication, with no disguise of human weaknesses. There was no secret, no political or court gossip, that was not brought to her.

Stronger than any man, with an iron will in a slim, small body, she drank her guests all under the table, yet never became drunk herself. Her drinking had a distinct purpose. She was devoured by ambition, first for herself, and then for the man of her heart. Witte, then a small official in the ministry, was a daily guest in her house. He was a dangerous mixture of the Baltic German and the Russian, with an overpowering physical appearance. He was modest in this circle, where Russia's highest aristocracy felt wholly at home without any restrictions. He listened smilingly to the weaving of intrigues about the czar. No Duma existed at that time;

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there were only the czar and his imperial brutes, or his servile creatures good and bad, and the "almightiness" of the police, with their reign of terror. It was a time in which it was easy to rise, a time when a young czar, afraid before his own country, before his own sovereignty, grasped at every strong plank to keep him above water.

Matilda brewed Witte's career out of her intimate knowledge of politics and society. Daringly she used all the little and big influences until Witte, with intellectual superiority and vast working power, jumped from the position of an obscure official in the ministry to that of a political factor who was heard and noticed.

Witte was wise enough to realize that his driving force was Matilda, that without her he never could maintain this new position or reach the heights of their mutual dreams.

She was still the wife of another, to divorce whom would be to stir up a hornets'-nest of disreputable affairs, exposing her aristocratic patrons and her compromised past. The enemies of the coming man gladly enough would utilize the scandal to crush him before he started.

The darkest hour for Witte and Matilda



COUNT AND COUNTESS WITTE

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dawned. It was imperative for the realization of their schemes to get rid of the husband. Witte's career was in danger, and Matilda was not willing to forego her own share in the glory due to her efforts.

Then Matilda suddenly became a widow. Witte married her, and they remained to the last an inseparable couple.

Witte rose to the dreamed-of glory. The day when the "Countess" Witte, the Jewess of the doubtful and miry past, was admitted among the ladies presented to the czarina crowned her ambitions, and her heart began to tremble for the stability of her great man's happiness. She was made of the same material as the women of the Renaissance, who walked cold-bloodedly over corpses to their magnificence. The shadow of her under-world life may have been haunting her when the sun set on the glory of her idol. She, with her piercing intellect, knew that the logical end of Witte's career led to his downfall, and she was prepared for it. To the external world she played the most interesting rôle throughout Witte's life. She was the dignified, tactful, and inspiring companion of the great man; she was

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the tragic, silent Muse when Witte was wrecked. It was the greatest homage for her that all the young boys of her former circle, when ripened to "excellencies," retained an admiring remembrance of her strong personality, of her kindness and intelligence.

Count Witte was a statesman by adventure and not by tradition, and for that reason he could never be an educator for a young czar. He feared too much for his own position, sometimes overstretching his authority, and sometimes yielding in servility to the moods of his sovereign. The czar had to look up to Witte, to the physical Witte; he respected muscles which he himself did not possess, and Witte's firm fist always imposed on him in the instability of his own indecisive character.

Witte loved to be compared with Peter the Great. He forgot that Peter's greatness was the sincerity of his barbarism, the most extreme goodness or the most extreme evil, while Witte fluctuated unbalanced between both.

Above all parties, but sharply antagonizing the efforts toward bringing about a separate peace, the minister of foreign affairs, Sazonoff,

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strictly followed his own political course. He had nothing in common with the fanaticism of the Pan-Slavists, nothing with the ambitions of the grand-duke's party. In his red palace on the Moika, behind the impenetrable quiet of the foreign ministry, Sazonoff had for many years been working out logically to an end a scheme of foreign policy. This policy could not be a success because it was far too advanced for Russia. His was the natural mistake of the cultivated mind, educated in countries where the subtle filigree-work of the ancient diplomacy is perhaps still applicable, to follow the precepts of other nations. Sazonoff was in love with England. He saw through England's eyes, and was of the sincere conviction that from that side might come the great salvation, the "awakening" of Russia. Twice in three years Monsieur Poincaré, the President of France, made a triumphal trip to Petrograd to popularize Sazonoff's policies. England wished to emphasize the idea of the Triple Alliance for the purpose of frightening Germany, of keeping in the background the eternal menace.

Sazonoff's work expressed this menace. He

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harnessed Russia to the interests of England in the far East, Russia's long-tailed, capricious, untamed horse to the heavy, well-bred, steady-going steed of Great Britain. England made large promises for the coupling of this badly matched team, whispering into Sazonoff's willing ear the alluring word "Dardanelles!"

When the *fata Morgana* of Constantinople paled on the horizon of the Allies' military operations in the Orient, Sazonoff found his policy crippled, and then he joined in the blind fury against Germany, whose stubborn endurance prevented him from giving to his country the result of his policy, the long-coveted warm-water port.

Sazonoff, a human enigma, with a head of a pleasant ugliness, a Slav through and through, with all the refinement of the Western culture, with a calculated reserve, a sophisticated spirit, and analytical mind, would have been a natural diplomat to Louis XIV, but never to a Russian czar or to a democracy. He was appointed ambassador to London.

There was no transparency in Russia's politics. Behind them was always the man who made the policies, and he was a Russian; he was

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mysterious. He promised, but he never kept his word, though not because he did not wish to keep it. It was not his fault; it was yours, for you should know that he gave his word to be pleasant to you without realizing that it would entail an inconvenience to him to-morrow. It was the psychological mistake of Sazonoff to compress the economic interests that Russia had with her allies into blood treaties. Former Russia would have deceived her allies sooner or later, not from wickedness, but simply because she never could endure the supervision of an outsider or could be forced to show her books. It would have meant an absolute contradiction of her own nature; it would have delivered too much of Russia to the cold criticism of the world; or, what the old régime feared most, it would have put upon the Government such responsibility as other governments sustain, and that meant a profound revolution of Russia's self.

To-day the new rulers are trying to destroy the different arbitrary systems which menaced the security of the people. Russia had four prime ministers after the outbreak of the war. Goremykin temporarily took the portfolio after

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the dismissal of Kokovtsoff, and so it happened that Russia had in the hour of her fate a substitute leader at the head of a department where the most extensive efficiency, the most intense state wisdom, and the most capable mind were demanded. Poor old Goremykin always had been the substitute housekeeper of Russia. This was the second time that he had been called in. He was too old, too tired to face the immense task, the gigantic responsibility, and he had nothing to say in an hour when the world had its head under the guillotine of national hostilities, and lost its head.

The military system wanted him just as he was, colorless, without any influence on the czar, just a political marionette. After a year-long war, in the autumn of 1915, Russian politics were again in sad confusion. The Government's control, an utter failure, ended with a clash. The situation was hopeless in its mismanagement. The most unspeakable bribes hampered the filling of contracts and the delivering of all kinds of indispensable material. Russia's industries were crippled through the hurrying away of all German directors, technical and mechanical artisans;

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untrained Russians had to replace them. American commercial representatives who were ready to accept orders were kept waiting months and months before their propositions were submitted to the ministers. As a minister himself never decided, but appointed the famous "commission," consisting of a certain number of other officials, he escaped all responsibility. For everything that had to be decided a commission was formed, over which sat another commission to supervise it; so, if mistakes were made, every man was saved. One by one the members of a commission studied the terms of every contract in minute detail. The official most interested in deriving profits made the most ridiculous objections, which inevitably aroused the opposition of the others; and when the decision was favorable, he added a foot-note to the report, stating that he joined the minority. So he never was suspected by the official higher up. The commission acted mysteriously. It shut itself behind closed doors, and nobody was permitted to disturb its secret meetings. No word penetrated to the outer world, but every few minutes the man who had submitted the contract received the telephoned

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result of the *pourparlers* from some supernatural spirit, and from the same spirit the report, which was kept strictly confidential, could be bought for a hundred dollars as soon as the commission adjourned.

No wonder that the congestion in ports and at the frontiers grew into nightmares. The goods to be transported covered the ground for miles and miles in the open air, without any protection against rain and snow. At Vladivostok and Archangel, on the Siberian and Finnish railroads, affairs were in complete disorder, and nobody could imagine how this chaos in transportation ever would be cleared. In the meantime soldiers and leaders at the front waited in anxiety for supplies that would enable them to be at least on the defensive instead of being shot down like poor animals.

In September, 1915, the czar, more and more inclined to the peace suggestions floating about him, let Goremykin change the hard seat of the prime minister for the restful grandfather's chair, and Stürmer appeared as a demonstration of the new system. He also was a substitute, a figure of indistinguishable political tints, a poli-

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tician without any *résonance*, a puppet with some power behind him. Thus the statesmen in Russia drove their personal ambitions in different directions, neglecting criminally the vital policy for the country, a clean and good administration. Nothing was accomplished.

Military operations were completely abandoned, and the public looked with painful amazement and faint revolt on this *laissez-aller*, *laissez-faire*.

Stürmer had to disappear into the anonymity whence he emerged, and the new prime minister, Trepof, sprang up. This man Trepof was an unfortunate choice. In the eyes of the world and among the Russian people his name was the personification of darkest Russia, of the "system," of the searching *ochrana* (the secret service), the most frightful terroristic and nihilistic era. It brought back the martyrs, the hanged and buried-alive martyrs, and all this in a time when the people needed to see beams of hope through their political leaders.

Again and again the world was assured by printed and spoken words that Trepof had a most liberal mind, and that he was quite the contrary

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of what his father, the dark governor of St. Petersburg, had been. All in vain. The curse stuck to his name, and his removal soon followed.

The czar, tired of selecting ministers, hazardously nominated Prince Golitzin as the fourth prime minister. Prince Golitzin was a political blank, and no time was given him to develop.

In the gravity of the situation the czar found himself isolated. He was frightened by the weight which pressed upon him. Governmental errors were exposed by the horrors of the war. Like enormous wings, gray hopelessness spread about him. The flattering tongues became speechless, hesitating, and stammering; the sovereign descended from his throne and attempted to be a man among men.

The czar sought his people; he sought the Duma. He opened the assembly for the first time in its existence, thus at last giving it his official recognition. The people cheered the czar; they embraced one another with tears of joy in their eyes. The czar, the "Little Father," was in the midst of those who represented the demands of the country. He would listen, he would understand. The spoken word would

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reach his ears, and never again would be misinterpreted by the scoundrelly intermediaries who always had had their own interests first in mind.

The progressives in the Duma triumphed. Speaking with new-found fearlessness, they forged plans for the present and spun dreams for the future.

At this time the czar, without political support, without an adviser, desiring one thing, doing another, himself unbalanced, hoped to find refuge with the Duma. The Duma saw in the apparent insignificance of Stürmer, then prime minister, its great opportunity to choose from its members the man of the hour.

The Duma was disappointed in its hopeful enthusiasm. It was no more than an imperial mood, a moment of distress or loneliness and perhaps curiosity, that made the czar drive to the Tauritzky Palace, where the Duma sits—the little piece of sugar in the hand of a sovereign to beguile the men of the people.

The Duma was offended, and split into factions, distrusting one another, accusing one another. Everywhere mystifications clouded the political sky, and around live questions again and

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again were spun intrigues of personal influence.

The Duma was still like a child struggling through infantile diseases, and found it hard to grow up in a state family of old prejudices and bad principles.

It seemed impossible that the century-old individual power governing Russia could be scratched out with a pen-stroke. The Duma did not yet represent for the people the invincible rock of security. They were not quite familiar with the idea that a body of men could be united to benefit them. In this one body were too many souls, and each of those souls lived in a separate body and had separate ambitions. The Russian believes in the individual man, whom he worships or whom he curses. A whole body, a corporation, means nothing to his imagination. The Duma was an eternal contradiction when it became a constitutional foundation in an autocratic state.

But it was only an official call that the czar made on the Duma, and all efforts on both sides never would have developed a mutual understanding, as the czar found no response to his peace ideas. The Duma could not comprehend that

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this idea had always been the real part of himself. The czar had not the nature of a conqueror; he suffered physically under the stress of battle, and the sight of blood gave him nausea.

The presidents of the Duma were subjected to the same surprising changes as the ministry. How many presidents were elected and rejected after the war began! The Duma and the government of the czar were always quarrelsome brothers. With crafty efforts the Government tried to conceal its state affairs, and the Duma was like a battle-field from which the members were always forced to retreat. The imperial Government, with its frightful disorder, its ever-flourishing graft system, was the terrible obstacle in the way of providing for the necessities of the men at the front and the people at home. None of the last unhappy ministers should be held personally responsible for a system that had lasted more than a century. The imperial Government was an old, crumbling body, and it was known that firm decision could crush it. That this decision would come from the men of the Duma was not doubted.

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In 1916, Russia looked with longing eyes to Protopopof, who then, as president of the Duma, seemed to take state affairs away from a rotten Government. But at that time the Duma itself was a quarreling, disorganized body, its members jealous and envious of one another's powers. When Protopopof was nominated minister of the interior, it seemed a triumph for the Duma. But it has been very rare for a man not to lose his head as minister of Russia. On the one side he was offered mountains of gold if he would let the cobweb of protectionism remain untouched; on the other hand, his political position always was threatened by a party.

As usual, the ministers—and Protopopof, too—worked for the party that they hoped would become the most powerful in Russia. This time Protopopof was on the wrong side, and blinded by his influence over the czar, he had not the foresight to suspect, in the Duma's consequent opposition to everything he proposed, the bigger forces behind the Duma, which caused its last adjournment.

Russia is the country where everything has been begun wonderfully and never has been fin-

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ished. The sense of time and economy does not belong to the Russian character. There is lavishness, a squandering of time, words, and money, which leads to no practical result. It will require years to separate the wheat from the chaff.

From the Russian point of view it is not astonishing that a prominent member of the Duma who attended the sessions for only a few weeks every year kept a sumptuous apartment in a first-class hotel of the capital, merely because he could not decide to pack his trunks. Life is too short for decision, and his valet was of the same opinion. The room filled with an ever-increasing collection of clothing, boots, and hats. The tables were covered with bottles, jars, boxes, perfumes, and medicines, papers and books, cigarettes, everything, as if a large family were on the point of moving. Nobody was ever permitted to touch a thing or to clean up the place, and it was a puzzle how the occupant ever managed to climb over all the obstacles and into his bed. During the sessions he lived in that atmosphere of "comfort," where he was able to stretch out his hand to secure at once whatever he needed. There he gathered his friends about the ever-ready sam-

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ovar, losing all account of time, arguing until the new day shone through the windows.

The Russian never knows exactly what he possesses or what he owes. He is not ashamed to borrow, because he himself lends freely. His is in a paradisiac state of unconcern; but if this unconcern is to extend to the vital questions of politics that involve other races who are exacting about keeping their affairs in order, Russians must first conquer themselves before conquering the world.

These characteristics of the individual Russian, the inconsistencies and contradictions in his nature, make him appear mysterious to more conventional nations. One could look with amazed interest on the habits of the soft-hearted, easy-going Russians and on their unbalanced politics if in the development of those qualities did not slumber an ever-present danger for the world outside of Russia—a danger which in new Russia will pass away, because liberty will give self-control and self-respect. Russians will cease to be a servile people, who humble themselves like slaves, and are kept obedient by the cruelty of their rulers.

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The new provisional Government is so fantastically composed that it is imaginable only for Russia. Five heroes went into this adventure with wonderful courage—the courage that naïve, strong people have. They are victorious, but if they are not following a plan clearly outlined for them by a friendly, experienced ally, no one can foresee how they will make the enormous body of Russia move organically.

Prince Lvoff, the president of the ministry, is the only one who has the repose of official tradition. The honor came to him not because he forced the czar to abdicate; the honor was always his. He had worked practically, progressively, and honestly. He had accomplished wonders in the zemstvos, which to outsiders always appeared to be peasant organizations, but which really were the organizations of the nobility that protected the interests of the peasants because they were its own. The peasant depended on the noble landowner, and to enjoy the blessings of the zemstvos, he had to submit to the decisions made by the nobles. That was to a certain extent profitable for the peasant, who was too child-like to dispose of his harvests in an advantageous

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way, who had not the money to buy machinery or to pay laborers, and who was shielded from exploitation by money-lenders. The zemstvos freed the peasant from the persecution of scoundrelly provincial governors, who before the zemstvos existed kept him in a serf-like oppression; freed him from the district police, who nagged him and took away his little money for imaginary misdeeds; freed him in a certain degree from the despotic superintendents of the estates of nobles, who enforced an arbitrary system.

In former years there was a patriarchal system in the zemstvos. The Russian preferred to have his own autocrat, whom he could approach personally, whose voice he could hear; even if he profited not at all, it was good to speak to the *natschalnik*, who was the zemstvo's chief of the district. Then, too, it was always a change for the peasant, an excuse for a little journey, for getting away from the village to bring home new experiences and prestige.

The *natschalnik* had to be eliminated because he had too good an opportunity to rob the peasant and to conceal conditions which should be revealed; for the *natschalnik* was not a saint, and

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wished to make more money than his position paid him. Then the affairs of the peasants were confided to the judges of the zemstvos. The relation ceased to be personal, and petitions and complaints had to be made on proper papers and in proper writing. This was a new embarrassment for the peasant, who despised documents, which he could not read, and who was suspicious when another person read a paper for him. He was never sure that he was told the right thing. He thought that it would make life simple to school his children, but the children were not eager to learn. Why should they study books? They knew everything about animals and what grew in the fields from their parents, who had learned from their parents. The Russian peasant has a wonderful instinct for plants and herbs.

The schools that the zemstvos provided were hopeless institutions, for the teachers understood how to adapt themselves more to the good-will of the peasants than to their own duties. The teachers waited for the boys to come to school, but there was always some work to keep the children at home. And when the zemstvo sent a commission to inspect the schools, there was sud-

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den calamity unless the visit had been announced. Then everything was prepared; the children were present and clean, and the parents made a holiday of the inspection, inviting the commission to eat and drink. Afterward, parents and commissioners, in happy mood, walked to the school. The report was astonishingly encouraging.

That the zemstvos were not only necessary for agriculture, but a blessing, was shown by their attitude at the beginning of the war. Here the great personal work of Prince Lvoff came in. He, as a really grand seignieur, devoted all his powers to the aid of his country. It was not a mystery how the business of war had always been managed in Russia. Prince Lvoff, with the aid of the brave, tireless, and practical zemstvo members, started the private purchase of supplies for the people and the army with the zemstvos' funds. Without the zemstvos and their work the war could not have been carried on, and the work of recruiting in remote Russia would have been impossible.

After the first year of the war the people in the south of Russia revolted against recruiting, against the war. The peasants had to be chained

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before they could be taken away from their homes. And they had not even vodka to make their departure more cheerful. Their treatment was so brutal and so cruel that with cries and screams they protested against fighting and dying. The zemstvos regulated conditions, giving generously to the state, and having a free hand for the people in the provinces.

The good practical machinery of the zemstvos, once regulated, worked marvelously for the war, and Prince Lvoff could look with satisfaction upon it, for young Russia is one of its products. Prince Lvoff became the head of a democracy by chance, but he was the right man.

Most amazing was the selection of Alexander Guschkoff as minister of war, or, better to express it, the minister for providing the soldiers. Nothing could be less warrior-like than this minister of war, and it is certain that he had never been familiar with military strategy. In his earlier activities he had known much about cotton and its manufacture, and had some knowledge of sanitation. The contract for a new system of waterworks from Lake Ladoga to Petrograd was awarded through him, but not without oppo-

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sition from great experts, who thought his ideas wrong and fought his schemes in the Duma of 1914. He is a great admirer of America and a Pan-Slavist through and through, which is a contradiction. He is one of the Russians who are gifted in gathering experiences from which to form absolute opinions without digesting the experiences. He is a sound money-maker, unforgiving when once offended, never able to bear criticism, and ready to avenge bitterly any grievance from the men who were in power during the former régime.

Professor Paul Miliukoff, the foreign minister, is a personality, and has a right to be proud of his achievements; and he is proud. Known, respected, but not loved, he remembers how terror looks, and he will realize that to a certain extent it must reign in Russia. He will have to use it despite his theoretical point of view of unrestricted freedom. The triumph of the first days of the revolution sustained the high tension in which Miliukoff had lived for years. In fortunate circumstances he will be steadfast, but with the first little mistake, the first sign of disorganization, he may lose the beautiful equili-

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brium with which it is necessary to balance the state affairs of young Russia.

Rodzianko, the last president of the Duma, is also a personality, physically and mentally. He is good-natured and not much of a republican. He knows that Russia must have a figurehead, and that this figurehead must be crowned; that, like old Russia, young Russia needs a "Little Father"; that there is not a great difference between yesterday and to-morrow; that Russians, to be contented, must have their distractions, their joys, and their fears. He is fanatical enough to swear fealty to the flag of Pan-Slavism and to save Russia from all her foster-fathers.

Kerensky, the minister of justice, is popular, strong, and suggestive. He is a simple, impressive speaker, and he has the most difficult task: he must be just not only to young Russia, but to the unhappy supporters of the unbalanced old régime.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUSSIAN COURT

THE great Catherine had endured for seventeen years the domination of the senile Czarina Elizabeth. As the wife of an idiotic husband she had lived under unspeakable conditions, in a country where not only nature sleeps most of the year, but where the people were scarcely awakened to the daylight, in the midst of a court of most ridiculous intrigues, of little and big cruelties, and of the most barbaric scenes. After the death of the empress, by the force of her personality she had broken the chains of an enslaved czarina, and had shaken off the suspicion and superstition that the court and the Government—the people did not count at that time—attached to her. She was proclaimed empress. With the jubilant cheerings of the people in her ears, she made her entry into the Winter Palace, accompanied by one of the three Orloff brothers, while the others interned her husband the miserable Czar Peter in Schlüsselburg.

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Catherine now breathed freely for the first time in her life. The little incident—the strangling of her husband—the light cloud on her new glory, soon disappeared, and life became gay and peaceful about her. Dark Russia lay behind her, a curtain that she kept carefully closed.

In constant correspondence with the artists and philosophers of Europe, she dreamed dreams of beauty, of freedom, and of the happy evolution of her people. In reality she did not press her new ideas upon them. She knew the country of her adoption, and she had learned from Peter the Great, who, in trying to move the sleepy colossus to a new culture, used the most barbaric weapons and was true to his motto: “The stick, though dumb, can teach.”

Catherine needed space for her wide lungs, thirsty for fresh air; she needed the consolation of art and science for the hunger of her soul; and she needed the imperial pomp of her court to demonstrate her will power to her primitive subjects.

She completed the Winter Palace and built the Hermitage, the gallery of art wonders. When

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one enters through the spacious arch into the immense square, with the Winter Palace in all its warm tints, in the background, one can imagine Catherine standing on the balcony overlooking the parades of her beloved regiments. The front of this palace faces the Neva, a stream of strongly flowing water broad enough to make the tear-bathed fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, on the distant side of the river, appear as a vision of hills on the top of which the golden spires of a church tower reflect the sunbeams. Over this fortress there is always a fine, consoling fog, created by the dampness which emerges, like veils, from the Neva.

In Catharine's time the vast, magnificent rooms were filled with her spirit and with the joy of life that she preserved in her sound body. To-day the Winter Palace is a dead splendor, and sad with the memories of all the tragedies, crimes, and terrors that sigh from every corner.

Every historic spot is kept untouched: the rooms where Nicholas I brooded in deep melancholy, in eternal fear of being strangled like his predecessors; the basement where the czar hid himself to take the relieving poison; the bottle

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which contained the fatal medicine, and even the spoon.

The apartments of Alexander are left intact, still breathing an incredible warmth of life from this amiable sovereign. Here are the pen he used for the last time, the half-smoked cigarette, the chair pushed back as he left the room to attend the parade from which he was brought back, a poor, mutilated body, to expire on a small bed behind two columns and a portière.

With the assassination of this most European of all the czars gaiety and life were extinguished from the Winter Palace. Gaiety did not mark the reign of Alexander III. Shadows of pale fear followed the heavy czar and obscured his life and that of Maria Feodorovna, the Danish princess whose warm blood froze in the sadness of the court. Her whole hope was in the future, and, with the atavism of queens who mixed poisons for their husbands, she dreamed of her own autocracy, the unbounded expansion of herself to the great independence attained by Catherine. Her sons were frail little boys with all kinds of inherited diseases. The czarevitch, the stubborn little Nicholas, who was never ap-

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proachable by reason, was not an obstacle to her. Perhaps, she thought, she could educate Nicholas, who was timid and not at all an imperial child, to renounce the throne in favor of his younger brother Michael, nearer to her heart. It served her purpose that Michael, who showed signs of consumption, had to live out of Russia most of the year.

With the terrible ambition of ruling Russia in her mind, the czarina did not prevent her husband from heavy drinking, though knowing that his constitution was shaken by alcohol. The giant's heart was weak, and his days seemed numbered. Circumstances favored the hopes of Maria Feodorovna. Secretly she formed her party, the camarilla of Maria Feodorovna, which worked feverishly to carry out her purposes. Her sons became men, and Alexander, notwithstanding his heart disease, lived longer than the physicians prophesied. Maria Feodorovna became restless. The czarevitch returned from his constant journeyings about the world, bringing back only his improved health and an eternal discontent. He was a poor, lonesome boy. He was never gay, and his debauches were not the

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outlet of an over-sparkling youth, but the result of the cynicism of a life without deep motive. He knew the history of his country; he feared his future, which was like the condemnation to certain death. It would not have been difficult to crush the tiny buds of his modest ambition. Like all weak natures, Nicholas needed a tremendous amount of flattery; he needed tenderness and admiration. With his comrades of the regiment he was often intoxicated, and in the sober moments of his life he was extremely bored and melancholy.

He created his own little court of sycophants, and he created the later influences, priests and courtiers; and as a court is not imaginable without womanly domination, the center of his life was the ballet-dancer Kreschinskaja. The Kreschinskaja was not a simple dancer, but one of the most clever and beautiful pupils selected from the best of the imperial ballet school, and institution where the dancers, taken at a tender age, are not only trained for dancing, but for accomplishments built up on a firm educational foundation.

The Kreschinskaja was an embodied flame,

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with eyes like fire in her spiritualized face. She was a queen among the aspiring creatures in the czarevitch's circle. She held Nicholas in her delicate fingers, and the day that she presented him with her first son he promised to make her his czarina. Why not? There was Peter the Great, who married, despite his living wife, Eudoxia, the Finnish laundress, and made her the czarina. And the Kreschinskaja was far more than a peasant girl. She could help Nicholas reign; she could be the real intuitive force of his life. The somewhat confused conception of his task as heir to the throne seemed suddenly to take distinct form in the czarevitch's mind; it would never be a burden if the Kreschinskaja could aid him. She was a child of the people, with the brain of an empress.

Maria Feodorovna smiled contentedly on the czarevitch's pseudo-court. She let her camarilla nourish and support his idea of marrying the dancer. Then, she was sure, his light as czar would never burn, and Michael, who was sick and good-natured, would be only too glad to leave the reins of the government in the hands of his mother.

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All the czarina's schemes developed rapidly. Alexander's enormous body, underfed by the heart, which was too weak to circulate the blood, swelled and swelled. Day and night he sat in his big arm-chair, tortured by suffocation and worrying about Nicholas, who was so poor a czarevitch.

From Gatshina the czar was brought to his Crimean castle at Yalta. Here the ministers revealed to him the dangerous ideas of the czar-evitch and the machinations of Maria Feodorovna's camarilla. The czar had one of his fits of temper, which, despite his desperate illness, were the terror of the court. He was still the czar, though the dying czar. He summoned Nicholas to Yalta, and forced on him the plan to marry him to the sister of the Grand Duchess Sergius, the Princess Alix of Hesse.

It was an imperial order. Only by accepting the czar's decree could the czarevitch alter his father's resolution to send the Kreschinskaja to Siberia and to kill her brood. The Kreschinskaja had to abdicate, but she was permitted to retain her place in the imperial ballet. Later, when the czarevitch was omnipotent, he gave a

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fortune to the dancer, built a magnificent palace for her, and bestowed titles on his sons.

In the white castle at Yalta began the drama of the life of the czarevitch and the Princess Alix of Hesse.

The princess arrived in the Crimea, a sacrifice to high diplomacy. The cool, white, slender flower of a highly cultivated country, the young girl with a sad expression in her eyes, was terrified at being placed on the throne of Russia, where the assassination of crowned heads was still an every-day affair. She was presented to the czarevitch, who made a pitiful impression in his state of complete breakdown following his separation from the Kreschinskaja. After they had exchanged a few conventional words, they were taken to the sick czar, who, heavily uplifting his enormous stature, gave his blessing to the couple kneeling before him.

At the head of the bed stood the czarina. The girl victim raised her eyes, and met a look of hatred. She nearly fainted, and was led away by her sister, the Grand Duchess Sergius.

It was springtime. The czarevitch and the princess walked in the solitude of the Crimean

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garden, around the white castle, where the preparations for their wedding were hurried. The two young people, drawn together by each other's heart distresses, tried to find amid the entanglement of unknown dangers a tie that would bind them to the duties which they owed to the circumstance of being born on the heights. In this icy atmosphere the throbbing heart has no rights, and they had to surrender their youthful dreams.

The czar loved his new daughter, and the young princess passed days with him, understanding the anxieties of this dying colossus, who was surrounded by the spider system of his wife and who had no confidence in the capacities of Nicholas. With the czar's hands in hers she made a silent vow to help the czarevitch uphold the burden of a crown. They were married with the dark wings of the death angel around them. The Grand Duchess Sergius received her sister in her arms after the lugubrious ceremonies, and took off the virginal veil of the young bride. The two sisters found themselves in tears, united under the weight of their fates, and they accepted their lots silently.

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With the increasing weakness of the czar, the camarilla again showed its gorgon head, and the bride, unprotected by the apathy of her husband, shuddered in fear. Alexander III expired. The pomp of the funeral was over. The czarina mother took up her residence at the Annitschkof Palace, the residence of the widows of the czars.

The young czar took the oath of office. Costumed in the pomp of the imperial ermine, the heavy crown on his head, he looked like a frightened child who tries on his father's hat, his father's coat. The hat slipped over the child's face, and the frail body disappeared completely in the coat. This impression remained. The czar's physical appearance was unfortunate for a sovereign. Little, thin, with a face that expresses nothing openly, he always gave the idea that his position must be a very embarrassing one, and the expression of his eyes was almost apologetic. He was not a man for publicity, not a decoration. He was not a czar of all the Russias. When he appeared, the people were immediately attracted by the mighty bodies of the Romanoff grand dukes, the towering, weighty men behind him. Nobody looked into the czar's

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face, nobody noticed the frozen smile, which contrasted pathetically with the sad eyes, and nobody ever imagined that publicity meant for the czar physical pain.

On the day of the coronation in Moscow thousands were buried under the grandstand erected for the people who watched the entry of the czarina. Above the dominant ringing of the Great Bell, which was answered by hundreds of other bells, the czarina's ear was struck by the death-screams of the people who had been waiting for her at the arch of the Kreml; and the six horses harnessed to the imperial coach, after a second of hesitation, sped over bloody bodies. The czarina's heart shrank; she grasped in a desperate pressure the hand of her husband, who, deathly-pale, looked out on the fateful scene, which augured ill for his reign. The czarina's anxious questioning met furtive glances. No one would tell her of the sinister omen that gave tragic significance to the holy day of her coronation as the Empress of all the Russias.

Moscow celebrated despite the mourning of thousands of her inhabitants. The great banquet-hall in the Kreml was a spectacle unforget-

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able to all who were present. It formed the right background for the canopy over the throne, for the colorfulness and brilliancy of the Russian national costumes and uniforms, and for the jeweled and brocaded robes of the holy synod. The Mayor of Moscow presented to the young czarina, who sat white and erect on her throne, the famous bouquet in the handle of which was the button that, when pressed, flooded Moscow with millions of electric lights. The czarina, who was crowned Alexandra Feodorovna, was led to the balcony, where she stood under the silent glances of the masses waiting on the plaza. The Kreml lights were first extinguished, and then the czarina pressed the button of her bouquet, and Moscow flamed in an illumination never before seen. Mute and depressed, the people gazed at the white figure who, with her first official step into Russia, had brought death to them. The young czarina returned white and trembling to the banquet-hall. From all the German cities the best artists had been assembled in Moscow for a most wonderful concert under a conductor from the home country of the former Princess Alix. She hid the tears of homesickness under her long

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lashes. The melodies dear to her heart brought back the memory of her happy maidenhood, and, shivering in the warmth of the summer night, her heart was contracted with bitter presentiments. Then remembering her vow, she raised her head, and when the irksome days of the coronation ceremonies were over, she resolved to live in strict devotion to her new duties.

The young czar found himself a sovereign without knowing the men of his father's reign, trusting nobody, loving nobody, and even a stranger and timid before his bride, who developed an unexpected energy and interest in state affairs. In her veins was the blood of women who knew their duties, and she had decided to be true to her traditions. The czar looked up to his young wife, who spoke wisely and with determination; but she did not speak his language, the language of his people. She was a foreigner, and Russia looked at her only as the czarina who would perpetuate the imperial race.

The czarina devoted herself fervently to the study of the language, so that she might come nearer to the heart of the Russians and win her

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husband's confidence. Her hope looked forward to the child she was expecting. Her first-born was a princess, and the poor czarina became timid again before sinister fate. She saw herself and the czar drifting apart under the influence of the czarina-mother. She lived in the shy feeling that the people met her with hostile superstition, and she sought consolation in religion, in the new faith of the Greek Church. Her second child, so anxiously longed for, came. Again a lovely little girl. The czarina-mother triumphed. Hers might be the final victory, and her hopes of seeing the Grand Duke Michael on the throne grew. She kept the whole police system in her hands, and the spirit of revolution then flowering through Russia served her purpose. All that was not plotted by the anarchists the cruel, fantastic camarilla invented. The little freedoms of the young sovereigns were under terrible espionage. For every theater party, for every entertainment, they provided cleverly arranged and dramatically discovered assassins. The young czarina became a silent woman. She suffered more and more from the misinterpretation of everything she said and did, and even her



ALEXANDRA, THE FORMER CZARINA

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thought, her unspoken word, was a source of eternal suspicion and persecution. Her young joy of life was slowly tortured to death by the ever-watching creatures of her mother-in-law.

From time to time the sovereigns longed for pleasures congenial to their youth, and the court marshal sent out invitations to court balls. In the big ball-room of the Winter Palace, under the soft, warm light of thousands of wax candles, the waltzing couples appeared languishing and exotic. The lights deepened the richness of the brocades, and brought out the wonders of resplendent diamonds and pearls on the Russian national costumes.

The czarina was very lovely, with a timid and yet proud carriage of her fine head and the roses of youth blossoming on her cheeks. She liked to dance, and the great court balls always surprised her into the tense expectation of a young girl.

At one of the balls, in the midst of the sweeping chords of the mazurka, the lights suddenly fluttered as if moved by a mysterious draft; a cold air blew through the room, and the ladies shivered with fright. A subdued whispering ran through the assembly, no one knowing anything,

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but every one foreboding. Looking with livid faces toward the place where the imperial couple danced, the guests saw only that the czar, grasping the czarina's hand, left the ball-room as if in flight. The music ended with a crash. The next day the rumor filled the capital that the ball-room in the Winter Palace was undermined, and that a bomb was discovered just in time to prevent the explosion that would have blown to atoms all the guests, among them the imperial couple.

The ball-room was closed. The camarilla worked well. Terror crept through the palace, crept through the doors into the private rooms of the sovereigns, and in livid fright they fled from the capital to bury themselves in the solitude of Tsarsko-Sselo, nowhere sure that plots would not be forged in their closest entourage. Restlessness grew, a frightful restlessness, and they had a home nowhere. Then the imperial duty demanded that they travel through the country, and on all of their tours accidents were arranged: rails were loosened, and a number of persons lost their lives; but the death of the imperial family was frustrated in time. The Russian people

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attributed all misfortune to the young czarina, and the saying went around that wherever she walked she would walk over blood. And wherever she went, she met enmity, she who was not yet taken into the lap of the Russian Church and who was not blessed with the heir that the land expected of her. With a tortured spirit the czarina looked forward to her third child. Again in the cradle lay a little girl, and the camarilla, the great spider, had its web around the soul of the young couple.

The czar faced the disappointment of his hope for an heir. He gave away to the melancholy of former years, to the discontent. He drank to forget his imperial misery. The stories of the victims of the *Ochrana*, of the tireless Trepof hunting anarchists, of Plehve, of Siberian horrors, of executions and torturing of young men and women, all lost interest for the czar. What was all this in comparison with the eternal fear strangling his own throat? He signed death-sentences mechanically every morning without any knowledge of the cases. Behind the iron gate of etiquette and fear lived the crowned heads. From the hands of the court-torturers,

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called chamberlains, ministers, or priests, they received their servants, their teachers, their confessors. Their sleep was interrupted to prevent rest, to prevent forgetfulness; their meals were poisoned to simulate plots. The windows were barred to the free and fresh air. They lived anemically, trembling in the swampy air of gossip, treason, and baseness. An impenetrable wall was erected around the imperial prisoners, and their souls were moved by the wires of a hundred-years-old system of court mechanism. They were moved to smile, to be graceful, to be cruel. In their names all frightful crimes were committed. The church revived the medieval inquisition among the Jews, and the pogroms were red-lined in the calendars of entertainment of the czar.

And the people stood outside the gates, bitterness in their hearts and curses on their lips for the czarina, the foreigner who was not even able to bring forth an heir to the throne. The jailers of the imperial couple grew into an almighty power, and the imperial leading actors of this tragedy shrank to a legendary existence behind their prison walls. Special automobiles incased in

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coats of mail were built to take the czar from Tsarsko-Sselo to the capital, if his presence was necessary. The Winter Palace was deserted, only a small wing being reserved for the members of the imperial family, and that strongly guarded. The open gardens were surrounded by a high gate of wonderful ironwork, and behind the gate the shrubberies grew dense and tall so that nobody could ever catch a glimpse into those enchanted gardens.

For a long time the people whispered that the czar and the czarina had been assassinated by the camarilla, and that only dummies were shown to hide the black deed from avenging Europe.

In deepest seclusion the czarina gave birth to her fourth daughter,—poor little girl!—and then the book of interest for her existence seemed completely closed. She clung to the church. Mysticism developed to the hothouse flower that intoxicated the czarina's free mind. The church decided that the power of the death-bringing *ochrana* and its executioners had gone too far, and feared for its own decreasing influence at the court and among the people. Everything had paled before the overwhelming terrors of the

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police. There was no room for politics, for the Government; there was only the police. Nothing progressed. Science and art stagnated. Like a forest uninhabited by birds, the land was deserted by its poets. Normal joys were cast out to give place to the terrible debauches of vice and drunkenness.

It was now that Pobiedonostsef, the sly high officer of the holy synod, saved the influence of the church. He loosened the chains around the wrists of the imperial couple. They could move again and travel without the death-clattering horseman speeding ahead. The czarina could play with her little daughters and could let them grow in all possible freedom. Every year when the Easter bells had sent their last peals through the capital, when "Christ was risen," the imperial family went to the Crimean castle, the Russian Riviera. In the sunshine of this part of Russia, in the gaiety of the South, the dark shadow of the camarilla lost its horror; it seemed to disappear, and the church dominated. First little liberties, were permitted, and passed undisturbed. Then excursions were ventured upon, informal motor trips; again the court had among its members

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the younger, gayer set. Under the blue sky and the spring spell the czarina's heart warmed. She became young again. With a longing for mystical wonders, she was ready for the sweetness of a young girl's romance. Providence had prepared for her this romance, which one day was to end tragically because she, the heroine, was the tragic Muse.

With anxious discretion the secrecy of this romance was guarded by the czarina's friends, so that it might not be revealed to the hawk-eyes of the camarilla and the world. The court-marshal, Baron Freederickoz, again took up the long-interrupted program of court pleasures. The Winter Palace was opened for one big ball, and every one was struck by the charm and the maidenly beauty of the czarina.

The czarina opened the ball with Count Orloff, the tall, slender man with the noble face who was one of the courtiers of the Crimean happy days; and when the count bowed deeply before his empress, her face flushed, and her embarrassment was noticed and discussed; but even evil tongues did not dare to criticize the unfortunate woman.

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The morning came when the sound of all the bells, followed by the twenty-one-gun salute, announced to all Russia the birth of an heir.

The czarina became the subject of the country's blessings. The holy mother, the church, had finally taken Alexandra Feodorovna into her special care. A new, fresh hope warmed Russia. Hymns were sung everywhere, the czar showed himself to the people, and the holy synod contemplated triumphantly the miracles of the church.

The baptism was celebrated with the greatest pomp. The throng was permitted to gather around the Kasan Cathedral to watch the procession.

The czarina-mother, Maria Feodorovna, had to carry the child, the unwelcome grandson who annihilated all her efforts and her ambitions for her son Michael. She held the little bit of potential manhood in her arms, breathing on the babe wordless curses. Poor little boy so ardently longed for, and then persecuted at his entrance into the world!

The czarina trembled for her new happiness. Her little treasure had to be watched, and even

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then she was never sure which of all the nurses or ladies in waiting, bought by the czarina-mother, might betray her.

The camarilla never hesitated at assassination. Positively true is the story that one morning when the czarevitch was put into his bath, the czarina, in a neighboring room, heard the child utter a terrible scream, followed by helpless whining. She rushed into the nursery, to find the boy lying in his tub, with a blue face, and desperately struggling to get out of this death-bringing danger. The czarina snatched her son out of *ice water*. The terrible mistake was attributed to the nurse. Again the liberties of the imperial couple were curtailed; again the terrors of anarchists and revolutionists convulsed the official class. Political riots took place, cruelties were committed. Free speech, spiritual freedom were violently demanded, and apparently the camarilla supported the revolution of the students. In Moscow the reign of terror instituted by the Grand Duke Sergius was avenged in blood. All remember the terrible death of this autocrat, who himself knouted the prisoners. The czarina saw in the tragic lot of her sister her own picture.

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She suffered terribly under real and imaginary persecutions, and more and more plunged into the mysticism of theosophy and the Greek Church.

From time to time the most abominable stories of the imperial court trickled out to the people. The diabolic influence of the camarilla was one of the red-flamed horrors.

These external events served to push the terroristic movements and the machinations of the czarina-mother into the background. The Russo-Japanese War broke out. The camarilla sought another hunting-field. Much depended on the outcome of this war, which could bring in its failure the abdication of the czar if a fanatic could not find the right moment to assassinate him. Maria Feodorovna sent all her creatures to the front, forgetting that the Russian always prefers the sparrow in his hand to the dove on the roof. Port Arthur's famous highwaymen lived in opulence, and let the soldiers bleed to death in the traps of the Japanese.

Before the Baltic fleet was sent out, the czar arrived in Reval to give it his imperial blessing. He stood embarrassed and too shy to make a gesture, glancing only at the proud fleet which

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was to win the victory that the armies could not achieve. The mechanical words prepared by the minister of the court came hesitatingly and stammeringly from his lips. The people were remote from him, from his soul, and they looked apathetically at him. Then the czarina, who accompanied him and who was never separated from her little son, had the spontaneous inspiration to lift the czarevitch in her arms, and, holding the child, just one year old, high above the czar's head in radiant maternal pride, showed the smiling boy to the people. For the first time they saw the czarina in flesh and blood, noble and beautiful, not the former czarina, the cursed, pale, curbed woman avoiding all contact, who, they had been told, hated all Russians. And there she stood the embodiment of the Madonna, with her laughing boy in her arms. Cheers thundered from men's lungs, echoing over the sea like a cry of hope.

The czarina herself felt a new life running through her veins, a new courage to take up the struggle for her son's sake, for her own redemption from the dark powers that stretched out their fangs. A time of hope freed her mind. The

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czarina then loved the sea, and she passed weeks on the imperial yacht, the *Standard*, with only a small suite, the persons nearest her heart. Among them was Count Orloff.

The most discouraging war news could not depress the czarina. She lived on the *Standard* with her little girls, her boy, and her romance, and she lived untroubled, young, and happy. Then the fleet that she had sent out with her blessings, and which in thought she accompanied through all its voyage, met the fleet of Admiral Togo, and was destroyed.

The czarina was thrown back into deep melancholy. Even the innocent blessing of the czarevitch had failed to save the fleet from disaster!

The Russo-Japanese War ended. The czar was forced to accept the so-called constitutional government. He himself was hidden behind Witte, then the mighty premier. The czar was remote from state affairs, and the next few years passed in the uncertainty of fears and the nagging threatenings of plots. What happened to Russia was accidental. As the cards fall in a game, ministers were chosen and thrown away.

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Despite the moral crumbling of his imperial life the czar longed, in the weariness of his heart, for something great; and if the backbone of his principles had not been so terribly injured by the demoralization of those around him, he could have saved the world from its greatest curse—war among nations. He not only dreamed of disarmament; he spoke of it. Russia's politics let him speak and apparently supported his moral rise, his utterly European conception of the world. Again an amazing episode was staged to make the nations believe that Russia, despite Siberia, despite the horrors that were known and the rumors of corruption that were wide-spread, made a noble gesture of peace.

As always in Russia grandiose ideas contradict the seriousness of achievements. The czar had the enlightenment of a supreme duty; it was the enlightenment of an hour, and the idea was extinguished in a moment when it should have been translated into an act. He suddenly became afraid of the enormous consequences of his great idea—the revision of Russia herself, the elimination of the Jewish problem, the education of the people, the political changes. The min-

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isters wrung their hands over the czar's sudden awakening, and the church worked with the *ochrana* to put into effect plots for more political assassinations. The czar's sovereign courage sank back into lethargy, and he became again a supine puppet moved by his creatures.

The disgraceful end of the war with Japan had crushed the popularity of the czarina-mother. Maria Feodorovna preferred to live outside of Russia for a while until the people could forget all the basenesses which had been committed under the flag of the camarilla. This camarilla had become very shabby, and in order to clothe it anew she went to England where she played Russia's interests into the hands of King Edward VII, encouraging his scheme for the political isolation of Germany, undermining and discrediting German influence in Russia.

Court life in Tsarsko-Sselo was reduced to the interests of the nursery. Despite their unwelcome entrance into the world, the four little princesses became sunbeams in the gloomy seclusion of their parents. Not the slightest shadow ever rested upon the sweet maidenhood of the girls. They were kept totally ignorant of the tragedies

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of the Russian court. The czarina did not wish her daughters to be erudite; she desired them to be happy and free, and let them pass their days in the fresh air of the gardens, in the healthful pleasures of outdoor sports. As they grew older they became the faithful companions of their beloved father whenever he appeared publicly. It was as if the young, beautiful princesses should protect the ever-threatened czar, and they did protect him.

The czarevitch, the child of his mother's heart, enjoyed his little life, horseback-riding on his big nurse, a Cossack of the bodyguard. He was tirelessly watched by the giant, who was the only person who could bend the iron will of the wide-awake, unusually intelligent child. As time went on the czarevitch embarrassed his teachers in arguing with them, as it is difficult to convince him to the contrary when once he has an idea in his head. His delicate health was a source of never-ceasing anxiety to the czarina. What would become of her if an ever-envious fate again should strike her? And the envious fate was not resting.

It was in August, 1912, in Poland, in the hunt-

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ing-castle of the czar, that the czarevitch, making a false step, dislocated his hip and caused a severe rupture. A slight operation would have cured him in a short time, but a peculiar hereditary disease, which makes every wound bleed constantly, rendered a surgical incision impossible. The dislocation developed a tubercular tendency, and the czarina faced the possibility that her son would be an invalid for life. Of all her tragic moments this was the most tragic. That the poor imperial woman did not lose her mind in this new trial, which the people again attributed to her black fate, was due to the consolation of a woman, of her soul-friend, the last of the intimate group belonging to the happy days on the yacht *Standard*. Count Orloff had died of tuberculosis in Egypt.

Mme. Anna Wiribouwa had divorced her husband, who was an officer on the *Standard*. Since then she had lived in strict privacy in her house in Tsarsko-Sselo, which was connected with the czarina's apartments in the imperial castle. Her influence never touched her sovereign's external life, and in this perhaps lay her great power. She never sought the czarina; the czarina sought

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her. It was Mme. Wiribouwa who brought Rasputin to the court. In Russia, where nature, climate, and a predisposition to the mystical work together, psychic forces are often found among persons of the humble classes. Mme. Wiribouwa knew of Rasputin tramping as a simple peasant over the country, comforting the poor, relieving the sick. Rasputin entered the gate of the palace.

When the peasant was brought before the czarina to heal her son she received this humble man as the redeemer sent to her by the supernatural powers she believed in. Her faith was not deceived. Despite the physicians' diagnosis, the czarevitch improved. The little life in him was strengthened by the hope he saw in the glances of his mother. He felt the sound power of the simple peasant who spoke of things that other men scarcely dared to think, of likes and dislikes.

When the peasant appeared, the dark priests smiled indulgently as on a new hysterical mood of the czarina, and ridiculed the words of the man whom they feared in the depths of their black hearts; but before they were aware of it, Rasputin

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aired the murky atmosphere of the imperial prison. He freed the souls of the jailed imperial couple; he gave them back their self-confidence. The sovereigns suddenly moved about as other human beings moved, fearlessly among their people. For the first time the Russians shared in the hopes and anxieties for their beloved little czarevitch. The whole country took part in this wonder-healing, and Rasputin was the great man of the hour; he had brought back the czar to his people and the people to the czar. His radiant eyes shone fearlessly through falsehood, and he saw the rich fatten themselves by the sweat of the poor. He destroyed the camarilla, and chased the false priests from the court. No murders were committed in his name, for he himself loved life dearly. He lived close to the imperial couple, because the sovereigns could not live in a hut in his home village. He was simple and natural enough to adapt himself to the customs of court life, and did not accentuate the unwashed appearance of the poor peasant to make his impression stronger. He changed his linen shirt to the purple silk of the Russian national costume, and instead of walking on bare feet, he wore shining

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high boots. He even enjoyed the refinements of life, which did not emasculate him. He listened to every one who sought him, and they did seek him. From far and near people of every class traveled to see him, and waited for hours in the hall of the house at the Quai Anglais, where he lived when he was in Petrograd. Automobiles and carriages, elegant and humble, stood in line before the house, and one after another men and women were received, spoke to Rasputin, and went away comforted by a few good words and the unforgettable impression of his face. He did not know more than the ten commandments require of men, and he never argued. He made no compromises, no comments; but he fought mercilessly courtiers or priests or ministers who in politics or mysticism circumvented the Biblical laws.

Rasputin, with the tenacity and force of a child, attained whatever he had in his mind. He desired that his brethren might be freed from the scourge of alcohol. He saw in vodka the black devil which had the people in its grip, to fog their spirits and to change the sound forces of the Russian into vice and slavery which made the people

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the victims of the sinners above them. He abolished the use of vodka in Russia; the czar ordered prohibition. Rasputin wanted peace with the same tenacity, and he was murdered by those who made the war.

Rasputin is dead. His death was the only mysticism in his life. He died a martyr; martyrdom was the natural end of his life.

That he found a place in the Russian court is not mere accident; it will seem natural when it is known how the crowned heads longed for all which was not of the court, not dark. He was the result of mystical desires, and all desires are more or less mystical. He brought the earthly flavor to the court; he was the light in contrast to the darkness that then was in power. He had the courage of the illiterate; he found words for thoughts which every one has, but in the entanglement of time and custom simply has lost. He was a contrast to the *ochrana*, covering thousands of crimes committed by men who lived as cowards under the shelter of this terrible name; he was a contrast to the mystical priests who heard the confessions of the distressed hearts of the sovereigns, to make later a flourishing commerce of

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those confessions. He walked unafraid through the world, preaching practical Christianity, which is the religion of children, and he did not pretend to be sent from God. He was a man with all the simplicity of a man, with the faults of a man; and his influence was greater for this reason.

Many have described Rasputin; few could explain him. It was not he who sought influence in political affairs with the czar. The ministers, uncertain in their own positions, and insincere in their ambitions, were responsible for the influence of Rasputin.

Rasputin lost the sense of proportion, as any man would have lost it who saw the whole court circling around him. He could not explain his wonder force, but he finally believed in it, and thought that he was sent by a supernatural spirit to command the world. He abused his power, and whoever, being of flesh and blood, has not done so? With his increasing might in the world, the czarina saw the faith she had in Rasputin justified, and so the peasant became omnipotent and unshakable. It was no longer the question what his religion was, and if he had been a Roman Catholic, he might have been another

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Richelieu; then his natural force, badly used, would have been directed.

The czarina could make him understood. She who was reared and educated in England, the graduate of a university; she who knew and discussed all the philosophers and their systems, she must have found intellectual and religious resources in him. Her gratitude to him when the little czarevitch improved in health, and her fixed idea that with Rasputin's removal her son would be in danger again, were perhaps reasons why she should protect him for a short time, but not for years, not after his death, which was shameful and full of horror. It is disquieting that Rasputin could be assassinated without making an end of him; he exercises his spell beyond the grave. He still puzzles the world, and he will represent in his memory the greatest mystical idea of his time of former Russia.

In any democracy Rasputin would have been either a great socialist or a great healer. He was no more than the illumined figure of a La Salle or the strong magnet of a Billy Sunday. The murder of Rasputin, with its frightful details, leads back to the diabolic spirit of the

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czarina-mother's creatures. Maria Feodorovna hated Rasputin for interfering with her cherished plans; she hated him for having brought peace and calm to the persecuted souls of the czar and czarina; and she hated him most for his new influence in political affairs, and for sustaining the czar in his peace ideas.

When the war broke out the czarina-mother, by an irony of fate, found herself in Berlin. Instead of being interned for all her mischievous deeds, she was treated very courteously, and even in this time of confusion and excitement a separate car for her and her suite was attached to the train for the Danish frontier. That the kaiser ignored her presence at the Hotel Bristol seemed to her the essence of brutality, which, once in a place of safety, with the German frontier at her back, she exaggerated into stories of infamous treatment. After her arrival in Petrograd she added fanatically to the persecutions of the German element. She accentuated, whenever she could, the German descent of the czarina, and accused her of heading the peace party at the court as a German agent. Even the great tragedy of the country, of Europe, did not

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prevent her evil spirit from inciting the most extraordinary intrigues. The only man she could not shake in his firm position was Rasputin, and when finally it was said that Rasputin had been murdered by Prince Yusupoff, who is married to the granddaughter of the czarina-mother, it was no longer a puzzle as to who had played the leading hand in this foul game.

There are heavy, solemn times in Russia. With a great, simple gesture the representatives of the people dethroned the czar. With pitiless severity they will judge the men who were around the czar, not his creatures, but his oppressors, who made him a constant victim. It was easy for the world to say that the czar was a nonentity on the Russian throne. The world did not realize how much force it required to be even a nonentity on the Russian throne, to have borne for more than twenty years a burden that would have crushed any man. The czar had in his frail body the quality of superhuman endurance; he never lived in the present. How could he? He lived in the hope of the morrow. His imprisonment was not a great change in his condition. He always lived as a man condemned for life to

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imprisonment, a man who looked out every day to catch a glimpse of the heaven to convince himself that heaven still existed. Joys were few in his imperial life. He had a vast fund of child-like faith; he had the passive heroism of a martyr to endure long years in his imperial jail. Nothing has changed for him. To-day he is the prisoner of the people, from whom he was remote through the absolutism of his entourage. The day when he signed the declaration of war he dropped his majesty. He slipped out of the disguise of crown and ermine, which had hidden his little, modest body and his face, and he put on the gray coat of the soldier, and was a simple figure behind the lines. The only sign of courage that he gave was to talk peace again in a time of wholesale hatred, and if he had not been unlucky in the choice of men around him, perhaps the world would have listened to his plea. As he lacked ambition and a consciousness of his exalted place in life, he will be relieved to be a prisoner of the people instead of the prisoner of the poisoned system which had threatened his life ever since he took the throne.

These are not the times of boundless passions

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that put Louis XVI on the scaffold to make him pay for his weaknesses with his head. The czar is officially jailed by his people, and that is enough to abolish forever czarism in Russia.

In the future history of Russia perhaps there will be no longer a so-called court life. The people have hoisted the red flag on the Winter Palace. The long-untouched historic rooms will be emptied of their musty imperial relics, which will be sent to a museum. Those fascinating remnants of barbarism may fall to dust with the democracy of the new times.

CHAPTER V

ARISTOCRATIC WOMEN IN RUSSIAN LIFE AND POLITICS

SILENT, strong, and inspiring, Russian women always have been the support of their men in every political and social movement. The change in Russia's political organization and the overthrow of the former rulers could not have been executed if the way had not been prepared with the tireless help of women.

The Russian woman is wonderful. She is the source of sparkling life, joy, and hope. She is also a source of delicate wisdom, of vast tenderness, of patience and forgiveness. No other woman can smile as the Russian smiles, no other woman has tears so hot and so sincere, and no other woman can hate so strongly and endure so silently what she endures for her man.

In former Russia, at the time when every house throughout the country was undermined by the passions of anarchism, involving sisters, mothers,

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and daughters, secret meetings were held in the palaces of high officials as well as in the poor dwellings of students. The woman-flower of the aristocracy, violently inflamed by human tragedies, threw bombs, was sentenced, and was tortured the same as the simple girl of the people.

Russian society was then in a paroxysm of terror and fright. A whole world stared breathlessly at the women and their sacrifices, their fanatical help, their speechless devotion to their men's cause. To-day, when the cause is perhaps victorious over that sinister control, the dark despotism of a secret police, a single leaf out of the book of woman's martyrdom during that terrible political era should flutter into the world.

The night of the assassination of one of the most feared governors of former St. Petersburg a dinner party was given in the house of a general in the suite of Czar Nicholas II to honor the arrival of a new French envoy. The daughter of the house, young and charming, sat beside the distinguished guest, and conversed in the wonderful, animated way of Russian women. As the guests rose the young lady dropped her fan. The diplomat picked it up, and at that moment

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the girl bent to whisper into the surprised gentleman's ear that she desired him to wait for her in his closed coach at the back of the house. Knowing something about the strange world in which he lived, the envoy, greatly agitated, anxiously watched the moment when he could leave the house.

The heavily veiled young woman slipped into his coach, and told him to take her to his private hotel. The diplomat became a little uneasy when this daughter of a general in the suite of the czar asked a rendezvous with him alone. Flattered by her attention, he had merely thought to take her to a cabaret where society women never are seen publicly.

The young woman leaned back silently in her corner until the carriage turned into a certain street; then she looked out of the window. She stopped the carriage, to leave a message with friends, she said. The diplomat saw her disappear into one of the uniform red-brick houses of the rather poor quarter. Returning after a few moments, she smiled happily. The diplomat asked her if something specially nice had happened to her. She nodded, and slipped her cool

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fingers into the hand of the elderly gentleman as if to distract his attention from the little incident. Once in his room, she was gay, witty, amusing. She smoked, drank champagne, and gracefully accepted the gallantries of her host. Suddenly he saw her glancing feverishly at the clock, and counting absent-mindedly the strokes of the hour. At the last stroke an explosion was heard, as if in the distance an automobile tire had blown out. She covered her face, and after a moment jumped up, opened the window, and, leaning out, suppressed a cry of joy.

The diplomat followed excitedly, stood beside her, and saw a handkerchief swaying in the air like a little white flag. The girl closed the window slowly, turned to the elderly gentleman, kissed him cheerfully on both cheeks, and said sweetly:

“Thank you for your hospitality. It is done. Our man is dead, and you must know that you saved me from certain death, and perhaps you saved my country, too.” Looking at the perplexed diplomat, who unwittingly had helped kill the man, she smiled charmingly and offered him her glass of champagne. “Drink this,” she said,

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“and I will drink from your glass. It is the greatest honor a woman can pay a man in this country.” The French cavalier could not refuse despite his hurt vanity, now understanding perfectly well why she had chosen him for the adventure. Thus she established an alibi and made the French embassy protect her! No other alibi would have been strong enough to save her from the searching *Ochrana* which knew her to be in the plot. To-day she was safe, but to-morrow she might be among those taken chained in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Whose heart does not contract with emotion on learning that a young girl fourteen years old was put into prison and left there twenty years for having hidden her brother's anarchistic documents? She had no part in his life; she was too young to be an anarchist. She had only understood the danger, and had saved him by sacrificing herself. Later, when she came back to the daylight, she was an anarchist, and was hanged in place of her betrothed, who had thrown a bomb.

The wife of one of the most despotic governors of this time was known as the angel of the stu-

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dents about to be executed. When only seventeen, to free her father from Siberia, she had been married to the old tyrant, and crucifying her young womanhood to buy mercy for his victims, she endured with the stoicism of a martyr her life with him.

Young aristocrats left behind them the splendor and luxury of their life, with its warm protection, to share the misery and exile of the anarchists who had won them to the cause. These women anarchists, students of the universities of Switzerland and of the Sorbonne in Paris, many of them princesses by birth, lived amidst the greatest hardships, doing needlework or laundering to support themselves and their male associates. Deserted by their families in most cases, they starved, too proud, too haughty, to permit any one to catch a glimpse of their private lives. Unforgettable was the funeral of such a silent victim, who, having lived on ten cents a day, faded away like a poor flower. To these women, who had no independent influence, but were a great help to the cause of their men,—husbands, brothers, sons,—should be erected a memorial, for they were no less heroic than the

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men who are buried in the swamps of Masuren.

Emotion is the great motive power in the Russian woman's life. Latent or awakened, it is never to be known whence it will come or whither it will drive. Nothing has changed. Conditions have always been the same for women in Russia. Centuries ago the noble woman, the woman *boyare*, lived in her castle, with all the power of the original landed aristocrats, in her environment of warm comfort, and unaware of the sordid details of life. She had her serfs, her devoted servants, who feared and adored her as a kind mother, considerate of her people's joys and sorrows. Between the *barina* and the peasant girls who have been accustomed humbly to submit themselves to the debauches of the *barin* grew a tolerant, understanding sympathy, and she protected the women from the brutality and the drunkenness of their own men.

When the Russian lady of to-day goes "home" to her estate she drops all the artificial life of travel and the social duties and restrictions of the cities. She returns to the primitive sovereignty of the *boyare* woman. She is surrounded by a

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crowd of servants, male and female, serf-like in their devotion. She maintains her own church, in which services are held with great pomp, the peasants standing in rows, caps in hand, and bowing deeply to let the *barina* pass. She loves her people, but she never takes the initiative in educating them, although she knows exactly what would be the right thing to do. She keeps them illiterate, ignorant, unless her husband is one of the progressives.

Through the whole womanhood of Russia there runs the sincere simplicity and concealed force with which Catharine, the peasant girl who became the wife of Peter the Great, tamed her man. He thundered, and she, childlike, hid her face in her sleeves; but with a twinkle in her eyes, soft and devoted, with motherly patience, she snuggled to the giant, and was absolutely certain to bring him back to his senses.

The Russian woman is wonderfully womanly. She is the most passionate lover, the most natural bride, the most understanding companion, and above all the best mother imaginable. She is the real half of her man's life; she is an instrument and a very powerful one, whether in the rank of

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a low official or among the forceful women who were near the throne.

It was an open secret that the Countess I——, with her fearless frankness and her practical energy, brought many business deals to successful conclusion. The American would say that she is a very smart business woman to get things done in Russia. She took neglected affairs out of the desks of mischievous *tchinowniks*, where they would have moldered for decades. She took them out by force, and because the only force in former Russia was fear, she used her influential position with the court. It was often a blessing that such a sound institution as the countess existed near the sovereign, and it is to be regretted that she was not made the president of a bank. This noble woman of refinement and tradition had the sparkling *esprit* of the *grand dame*, and the Russian is far more a *grand dame* than all other women have been, for she uses her intellect, her eloquence, and despises the cheap and futile stratagems of the courtesan.

Life is serious in Russia nowadays, and the time has passed when women, like the lilies of the field, are nourished and adorned. Perhaps it will

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be under the Countess I——'s constructive power that women will work in coöperation with men and not as their competitors. Competition between the sexes would never do in Russia, but women could replace men until their little sons were grown up, and able to take their tasks from their mother's hands. Any help for the betterment of industries or government will be welcomed with enthusiasm, even though coming through the mediation of a *grand dame*.

And Madame N——, being so great an aristocrat that she does not need a title, for her ancestor was the mother of Peter the Great, played cleverly on the weakest side of the European man, his vanity and his worship of titles and decorations. She opened a gay little shop where pretty titles and buttonhole jewels could be bought. One can imagine what entertainment the lady got out of the stupidities and ambitions of the parvenus. The profits of this business went to one of the charitable institutions under the protection of the czarina dowager. Madame N—— had in her stock the greatest assortment of honors and orders, and the choice was merely a matter of price. It is to be feared that, with the

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expulsion of the German element, the business ceased to flourish, as the Russian gets his "Excellency" anyway, and in most cases cheaper.

Near the throne, too, was the Countess K——, and in the beginning of the war, the news trickled through the dense tissue the censor had thrown over Russia that she, one of the most interesting women of the aristocracy, had been arrested. Those who knew that she had formerly had the principal political salon in Petrograd and that in her white villa on the islands she had gathered the diplomatic and political world hoped that her arrest was founded on over-excitement. She was not the woman to sell her country. In times of peace everybody spoke about the amusing intrigues of the white villa and the brilliant countess, who was not only a perfect conversationalist, but had the political flair.

The diplomats had their secret wires in the cool, white little villa. They received information there, and perhaps sometimes acted on it. The snake in this amusing and amused Eden was Ambassador I——, a former head of the ministry, and the rabbit was the German ambassador. Everybody watched Ambassador I——, who had

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a great appetite for swallowing the passive German, and it was said that the Countess K—— prepared the meal. Then she was working for her own country, and her intrigue, even if justified, was naturally not very fair, because she played on her intimate friendship with the German ambassador.

However, the news of her imprisonment sounded very serious, and one day the newspapers published broadcast the information that the countess had been court-martialed and shot. For all those who had passed enchanting hours in her white villa it seemed to emerge in memory, ghost-like in the silvery clearness of the Russian early-summer nights, when the sun set only for a short misty dawn, to rise again in ardent splendor; where men and women glided shadowlike over the narrow paths among shrubberies and the young birch-trees, which vibrated in the morning air, and where have been whispered not ancient love-sonnets, oh, no, but death-breathing state affairs. And another picture of memory shows the Countess K—— in her palace of the Sergevskaga, where she opened her doors for magnificent fêtes, like the tales of a thousand-and-one

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nights, where the young imperial daughters and the fervent young aristocrats danced to the soft and warm melodies of Russian music.

The Countess K—— was not shot. From the palaces of gaiety now sway the flags of the Red Cross; the white nurses are the graceful dancers of a little while ago, and the poor suffering cripples are their brilliant partners of the fantastic fêtes. The Countess K—— will never go back to the old profession of breeding poison bacilli from little hurt vanities, and developing them into the frightfulness which now is killing youth and happiness and beauty. Her participation in dangerous plots led, under the new régime, to her arrest from the Chinese embassy, where she was hiding, and where the infuriated soldiers found her and dragged her to prison.

Another palace on the Quai de la Noblesse bears the flag of sadness; it is the home of the Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, or the Grand Duchess Vladimir.

She and the grand duke were once regarded as the most worldly couple of the capital. He was as beautiful as a young god, and she the most admired woman, full of the joy of living. Their

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life was the eternal source of the gayest stories of the *chronique scandaleuse*. Unforgettable are the famous events of the Restaurant Ernest that banished the grand duchess for one year from the Russian court. The *Troupe française*, very much patronized by the imperial family, had its season in the Michelsk Theater, and high society, after the theater, had its supper parties at the Restaurant Ernest in the historic *chambres séparées*. On a certain night the grand duke's party was rather conventional, and the grand duke himself was bored. The party grew more and more silent, and involuntarily listened to the increasing gaiety in the neighboring room. The *maître d'hôtel* was asked about the laughing and joyful party, which turned out to be the French players. The grand duke ordered the door opened, and, to the amazement of the actors, the wide wings slipped aside, and they found themselves mingling with court society. The grand duke, who had decided to enjoy the night, drank more than court etiquette permitted, and forgetting his noble station, he put his arm around the waist of the leading woman, the respectable wife of the principal actor, and kissed her. Instantly

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the actor put his arm around the grand duchess and kissed her. The somewhat misty eyes of the grand duke beheld this action, and the aristocratic blood of his imperial Highness began to boil. He slapped the actor in the face. This was the signal for a battle, which ended with broken china, tables, and chairs, and with the entrance of the police, who closed the place, thus punishing the poor manager for his short-sightedness in having permitted a "mixed" party with those "French plebeians."

Next morning the grand duke was summoned before his brother, the Czar Alexander III, who, looking at the variegated face of Vladimir, which showed the nicest pattern in green, blue, and yellow, had to conceal his laughter under his indignation. He ordered that the grand duchess should live for a while in the cooler social atmosphere outside Russia. Since then the handsome grand duke has died. Maria Pavlovna has pleasantly and charmingly headed charity fêtes or favored Paris and Biarritz with her presence, giving luster to French-American society, and bringing back to Russia much interesting and valuable information of a character more com-

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mercial than diplomatic. It was said that through the cleverness of the grand duchess the union of the French plants of Schneider-Creuzot and the Russian Putilow munition plants were brought about. It is certain that the grand duchess now brings by her warm-heartedness much blessing to the poor soldiers who are nursed under her roof. She is very Russian, this grand duchess of German descent.

The activities and ambitions of another character, the Grand Duchess Anastasia, wife of the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaiévitch, ended in the autumn of 1915 with the dismissal of the grand duke. She is the daughter of the King of Montenegro, a splendid business man, who put into his daughter's head the idea of becoming czarina. This, he dreamed, would be the best and the last *coup* of his active life. The first year of the Great War the grand duchess lived in a dream of ever-growing glory, being surrounded by flatterers who paid court to the "czarina-to-be," thus widening the cleft between the palace in Peterhof and the marble palace on the Neva. Her fanaticism for all that was Slavic set on fire the imagination of the grand duke, her husband, and

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started the conflagration of the world. She has seen her glory broken to pieces, she has faced the downfall of the grand duke, and it was said that she would return with her husband, who would accept his reinstatement to former superiority in the army from the hands of those who dictated the abdication of the czar.

The czarina is the great tragic figure in the new drama where the imperial family have the leading parts. She is accused of having betrayed Russia; she is made the cause for sins committed more than half a century ago, and she is not Russian. This is her greatest crime, and she is paying the debt to her own deceived soul. She tried too hard to be a Russian, she gradually narcotized her sound spirit with the incense of the Greek Orthodox Church and its mysticism. She was in a state in which a human being, desperately unhappy, intoxicated herself to forget, to live under the veil of unreality. The reality in the life of the czarina made everybody shudder who knew what her life was. Her strength was broken on the day of her coronation and never quite recovered. Had she had the self-preserving energy of the great Catharine, she would have

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shaken off the weakening influence of the czar, under which she suffered. The czarina contradicts by her actions what was a reproach to her. She is not a German; she walked along with the czar as far as he went, and she never revolted; she never struggled to find again her own way to light and certainty. Her martyred soul was condemned to death; her mind became blind, and her eyes looked into a hopeless emptiness. She looked for a strong hand that would guide her and teach her when she had forgotten how to walk straight. She thought the light must shine from the people, and she took the hand of the peasant, humbling herself and believing in the simple faith of Rasputin. He was not the dark power for her; he was her light, and his death had brought back to her the dark powers which have strangled her life. The czarina is a legendary personality, a woman who lost her way in the density and the mystery of Russia.

She did not belong to the influences in Russia; she had the terrible passivity which the czar possessed, and which was paralyzing to everybody in his environment who had not the force to resist or to dominate him. The only salvation would

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have been for the czarina to separate from the czar. It is too late now; she has descended the steps from the throne which she was unable to hold. By birth she had carried into Russia the strong will of those women who knew their duties; but she became a Russian, and that was her doom.

The strong cruelty and the cold calculation with which the czarina dowager, Maria Feodorovna, worked, should have been an example for her. Her tireless, unscrupulous machinations brought Nicholas to his fall.

Although Maria Feodorovna was heart and soul in the war enterprise, war between Russia and Germany, war between the old and new régimes, she must have been disagreeably surprised when the war led to the revolution dethroning the Romanoffs. In her mind the new régime meant her ruling influence through Michael; the appointment of ministers and interior and foreign politics in her own hands. A second Semiramis of the North she would have governed Russia in the darkest, reactionary form without any concern for the people.

Many years ago when a procession headed by the priest Father Gapon marched to the Winter

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Palace, people from all parts of the city joined the slow-moving masses that with peace in their soul sang their sacred old songs and carried their pleas to the czar. Even the police did not dare to stop this pilgrimage of faithful men and women, and let the procession pass through the arch at the entrance of the court of the palace. It happened that the czarina-mother, who had attended mass in the chapel of the palace, saw the procession sweeping toward the square and heard the monotonous singing. She thought that it was the first sign of the storming of the palace, and, before the czar knew the intentions of the approaching people, she summoned the guards, and it was she who gave the first order to shoot among the kneeling men and women who were prostrating themselves before the Little Father and who fell dead with their faces in the dust. Children, anxious to see the parade, had climbed on lantern-posts, trees, and gates, and were shot down, falling from their lofty places to the feet of their parents.

When the czar recognized the terrible error it was too late. The frightened soldiers who had fired on their own brethren bent their heads, and

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they will never forget what the czarina-mother made them do. The silence of death covered the place, from which the soldiers who had drawn their rifles, helped to lift the bodies to the large open peasant wagons. With the bloody Sunday the name of Maria Feodorovna was fatally associated.

Nothing could break the force of the czarina dowager; no priest, no superstition. She loved life, and she knew that life never lay in the dusky air of the church. She walked over corpses when it was necessary to push her plans. Her political education was finished in England, where passions or sentiments were never mixed with politics. She went home from Germany when the war broke out. The Germans, not knowing, let her go back to Russia with her heart full of hate and contempt for Germany and the unshakable resolution to change the Russian system. She is not Russian at all, and, paradoxical as it may seem, this makes her strong in Russia.

In the seclusion of her little house in Tsarskoje-Sselo lived the only woman who has been close to the czarina, and whose influence was not with state affairs, but with the little personal happiness

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that was brought to the czarina in the last years. It was a spiritual influence toward the supernatural; and instead of clarifying the czarina's mind, it was confusing. Anna Wiribouwa, the genuine fanatic, devoted her entire life to redeeming the czarina from the dark powers that surrounded her. With the help of Rasputin she destroyed the pale fear which held the czarina in an eternal suppression of her own personality. She knew why the czarina could not reach the sympathy of Russians. It was the insincerity and the uncertainty of the czarina's own feelings. The Russians are very susceptible to this. They cannot be deceived. They will not have imitations. The czarina always seemed to be embarrassed before Russians because she was anxious to please them. Anna Wiribouwa was the woman in whom the czarina confided all her struggles. Religion did not help any longer after the despicable intrigues of the court monks. Anna Wiribouwa decided that the czarina had to be cured by the psychic forces, and the great mistake began with Rasputin.

Anna Wiribouwa's life was bound to that of the czarina through a deep secret, which is the

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secret of the two women, and which never will be revealed unless Anna Wiribouwa betrays the great tragedy of an empress. But Anna Wiribouwa is a Russian, who would die a thousand deaths before delivering a secret buried in her soul. She is one of the strong even in her errors; and she is one of the wonderful Russian women without any ambition. She would have had the same devotion for the czarina if the sovereign had been a simple woman, and she will have the same devotion for her in her exile. Both are of the same planet, to speak in the terms of Anna Wiribouwa; their souls united for the earth and for eternity. Anna Wiribouwa is the great enigma in this court tragedy, and her strong belief in the czarina will help to transfigure this pathetic image of a sovereign.

Among these big figures connected with recent events, are many stories of women who are still working behind the scenes, and who one day will be at the head. Others, married to Russians, were persuaded to barter Russian interests to foreign powers. One of these is the Countess N——, an American by birth, divorced from her first husband, a German baron. As the wife of

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a former military attaché in Paris she had opened years before the war her hospitable home to would-be society people of rising ambitions. Count N—— was removed from Paris to be one of the leading officers in the general staff of the Russian army, and the countess was arrested at the beginning of the war, accused of having sent information to her first husband, the German baron, with whom she had remained on friendly terms. The intermediary, a young attaché who had been rewarded by the countess with her favor, was shot. The countess, it was said, was sent to a fortress, but was later released, and is living under surveillance in the house of her husband. But who ever will know the real dramas that took place under the secrecy of a court-martial? Will these veiled human tragedies be revealed some day by those who took part in them?

The Russian woman is deeply rooted in her own country. She develops differently in other conditions. Her personal independence is absolutely harmonious with the Russian life. Frequently her contempt of conventionalities produces a strange opinion regarding her moral sense. The mother of the Crown Princess of

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Germany and the Queen of Denmark, the Grand Duchess Anastasia of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, held court in her villa amid the enchanting perfumes of the Riviera gardens. It was a court of the time of the Decameron of Boccaccio, no more, no less. Yet despite all,—and this is the point of greatness in the laxities of the uprooted Russian nature,—she gave her daughters not through example, but through the sincerity of her criticized life, the liberty to become what she had been or to be happy in the strong and simple duties of family life.

The morganatic wives of the different grand dukes remain in modest retirement, that is never observed in other nations. They are far too intelligent to be banal or to be rejected by the aristocracy, and they live outside Russia in the full happiness of their marriages. They would have returned if the Grand Duke Michael took the throne. He himself once gave up the right to the crown by marrying the divorced wife of one of the officers of his regiment.

The Russian aristocrat is really the Russian woman. All the national characteristics are combined in her and brought to the culmination

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of refinement. She takes care not only of the beauty of her body, but first of all and especially of the beauty of her soul and her spirit.

The Russian man adores his woman. He listens to her, and conversation is the chief attraction that women exercise over men. Women are the warm touch, the reconciling element in Russia, the steady element in this country of contradictions. There slumbers a vast hope in the heart of a people where women are so sincere in their greatness and in their sins, where hypocrisy has not yet impregnated their souls. A Russian woman's love cannot be bought. She shares voluntarily the degradation of her man, and she shares gladly his heights; but she will never humiliate herself to a social lie.

CHAPTER VI

THE END OF THE ROMANOFF DYNASTY—THE GRAND DUKES—PRINCES WITH A BIRTHRIGHT TO THE THRONE

WHEN the little czarévitch was stricken with a disease that seemed incurable, Russia had to face the problem of the succession to the throne. The Romanoffs had to pass in review one by one.

There was, first of all, the czar's brother, the same Grand Duke Michael who was chosen by the new democracy as regent for the little czarévitch. The holy synod of old Russia would never have recognized Michael as a possible heir to the throne, because he had renounced his rights when he married the divorced wife of one of the officers of his regiment. He met Mme. de Woulfers at Gatshina, at the home of his general, Baron Girard de Soucanton. The general and his wife favored the romance of the grand duke without believing in his serious intention. However, despite the ambitious intrigues of the czarina

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dowager, he threw away the imperial burden and married Mme. de Woulfers. Baron Girard was pensioned for the mere accident of having introduced the beautiful woman to the grand duke, and Michael's name was erased from the book of Russia's court, and his disgrace was published by the czar's declaration in the newspapers that he would not be responsible for any debts contracted by his brother.

The Russian crown seemed not to be attractive to the Romanoffs when in competition with the favor of women. For them the crown jewels lost their brilliancy when compared with the luster of beautiful eyes. Of the three sons of the Grand Duke Vladimir, Cyril, the eldest, a rear admiral in the Russian navy, gave up his right as heir presumptive to the throne when he married a Princess of Coburg, the divorced wife of the czarina's brother, the Grand Duke of Hesse. The czar could not object to the pedigree of the princess, but the rules of the imperial house and of the Church of Russia did not recognize the marriage of divorced persons. The grand duke was banished from the court and dismissed from the navy, but after a year he was restored to his

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rank in the service, while still ignored at court.

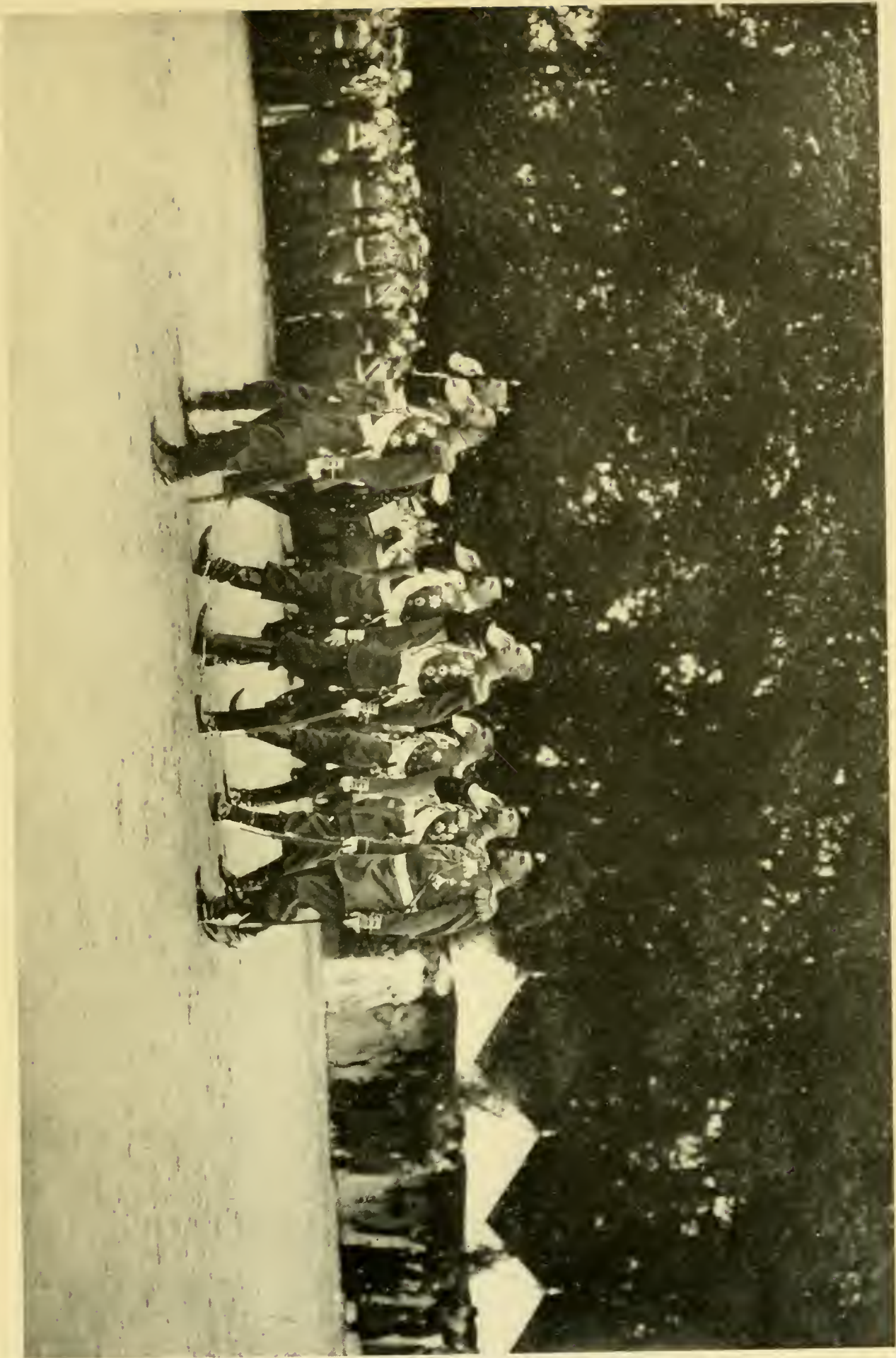
Boris, the second son, would then have been heir, but the idea of making the gay Boris a czar seemed to the world only a joke fit for the *opéra comique*—Boris, the *trotteur* of the Parisian boulevards; Boris, who was the center of all the *chroniques scandaleuses* wherever the great world dined, supped, and sojourned; Boris, the spurious imitation of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. There was this difference between the two that the Prince of Wales was a *grand viveur*, with an exuberance of spirit and temperament, and bored with the conventional and insignificant life to which a crown prince is condemned in England, where even a king is a grand seignior of leisure, while Boris had no resources. The stories of the Prince of Wales were amusing and witty, but the amusements of Boris were more or less shocking, and if he had not been a grand duke of Russia, an excuse for his idle life, he would have been looked on as a negligible quantity of society. The Russians would have revolted against the crowning of Boris, though less for his private life than for the negative heroism that he showed in the Russo-Japanese War,

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There was still the third of the brothers, Alexander, a good-looking officer of the body-guard who was probably not exposed on the firing-line of the Great War.

The Grand Duke Paul, brother of Alexander III, also preferred domestic happiness to the uncertainty of a Russian throne. He married as his second wife the Countess Hohenfelsen. By his first wife, the Princess of Greece, he had two children, the Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlowitch and the Grand Duchess Maria, the much criticized, capricious Princess of Sweden, who, bored by her husband and her life at the Swedish court, divorced Prince Wilhelm and went back to Russia.

Dmitri was pointed out as the presumptive czarevitch not officially, but officiously. After the death of their mother, Dmitri and his sister, children of tender ages, passed their youth in Moscow under the care of the Grand Duchess Sergius. Despite the curse resting upon the house of Sergius, the children had a delightful and happy youth with the angelic grand duchess. The terrible end of the tyrant made a lasting impression on the delicate Dmitri, especially



MILITARY PARADE

The former czar, with the suite of the grand dukes, Nicholas being at his right

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after he learned that on the first day set for the assassination the death-bringing bomb had not been thrown because he accompanied the grand duke, the revolutionists sparing the life of the little boy.

The idea of being thought of as the future czar of Russia depressed Dmitri. He had to leave the care of his beloved aunt and to take possession of the palace on the Moika, where first of all he built a big skating-room, his boy's dream. The preparation for a future czar meant first the undergoing of the hardship of an extremely severe military education, to be a perfect horseman, to be trained as if for a circus, to become the best shot and most fearless fighter, whereas the spiritual qualities of Dmitri were specially developed. A princely life, with its reckless pleasures in worthless company, the squandering of health and moral ideals and frequent intoxication seemed to be inseparable from the conception of an heir to the Russian throne. The delicate, slender Dmitri became a pathetic figure in his blasé youthfulness. Life had no secrets for him, and his refined, subtle tastes became submerged beneath brutalities that he thought heroic. Once

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he offended his superior officer publicly, and though the military honor apparently was saved by the arrest of the young grand duke in his own palace, the incident was not the careless frivolity of thoughtless youth, but the alarming sign of the Romanoff inheritance. In military life an eternal contradiction was forced on the imperial princes. In one way they were treated as simple officers in their regiments, being on terms of cordiality with their fellow-officers, which is to say that the princes condescended to their comrades, and therefore never got over the selfishness of the autocratic feeling. An invisible barrier was erected even by the superiors who always danced on a glass floor with every little imperial highness. Sooner or later, for some certain purpose, a party was formed around each inexperienced princely boy, encouraging his self-importance, which was often the basis of his later tyranny or viciousness. It was seldom that one of the grand dukes played a really active part in Russia's politics. All were more or less figure-heads of a party, and used by it until it ended invariably in sensational scandal.

Another Romanoff, who died recently, the

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Grand Duke Constantin Constantinovitch, the dreamer and poet among them, himself too modest, too much of a philosopher to believe in the blood privilege which gives the right to govern a people, imagined his splendid boy Oleg to be the hope of Russia. Oleg was killed in Poland. He was only seventeen when he took his commission and went to the front to replace fallen comrades. Only a week, and he died a real hero!

No, the Russian throne was not a place longed for. It was a place with no prospects, with a sterile hopelessness for everything to which a man aspired in life. The power of a Russian czar extended only so far as his creatures permitted; he himself was the most oppressed man in his country.

The circle around the Romanoffs grew very thin at last. Even the popularity of Nicholas Nicolaiévitch was a story believed only outside Russia. Those who exultantly went into the first battles were killed or wounded, and the soldiers whom the grand duke led are gone. The men now fighting on the Eastern front never saw Nicholas. This same grand duke who told his

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generals that he would hang every one of them who might steal would have also gladly hanged the five who became the rulers of new Russia, the men whom he was compelled to obey *faute de mieux*.

Long before the will of the people ended the Romanoff dynasty it was in danger through the circumstance of the little czarévitch's physical unfitness. In this boy slumbered all the qualities from which to mold a real emperor. He was morally and physically superior to the models of grand dukes with which the world is familiar. His ambitions were not satisfied by the brilliancy of military spectacles; he had the ambition to know, to study, to search for the deeper sense of things. The child was so beautiful that a special angel should have guarded him for his impending task.

So much youth, so many talents, and so much manly force of the Romanoff could have been mobilized for the sake of Russia if the tendency to terrible debauches had not been deeply rooted in this dynasty. There were no moral restrictions. The czars never hesitated to be bigamists,

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to sin against the laws, for the breaking of which they themselves persecuted their subjects.

There were other princes in Russia called imperial highnesses, not quite grand dukes, and it was not a secret that a party was at work for a new dynasty. It intrigued for Prince Yusupoff, who recently was brought before the eyes of the public in connection with the murder of Rasputin. Those who have met the elegant prince and know of his estheticism and refinement will never believe that he could have spotted his white, slender fingers with blood. Prince Yusupoff married the daughter of the Grand Duchess Xenia, the only sister of the czar, and his own cousin. He would have brought a new line without the slightest assurance for the betterment of conditions. The prince did not give the impression of a personality that could bring into Russia not only new blood for the coming imperial race but new ideas, a complete change from old rules, from autocracy, he himself being a descendant of the Tartars.

He was educated at Oxford, and if he had been chosen by the czarina-mother to be the first

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of the new dynasty, it would have been a terrible omen for him. Any complicity in the disappearance of Rasputin, with all its cruel and barbaric details, would have been a sad beginning for a promising career. The Russian throne would have been only the stimulus of an adventure and not the supreme desire of a noble youth to give to a beloved country freedom and constitutional rights. Even if Prince Yusupoff himself is innocent of this murder, the world first learned his name in this bloody connection, and his house was virtually used to carry out the plot. With this entry into the history of Russia he could never have been accepted either by his own country or the world.

There are still many princes in Russia, noblemen of long traditions, some of them dating back in the origin of their families to the Ruriks, an older dynasty than the Romanoffs. They have names known all over the world. Among them are revolutionists and anarchists, grand seigniors and scientists, fascinating and alarming in the combination of highest idealism and lack of conscience, bringing wherever they go the contradictions of their own natures, and always giving

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the impression of the instability of their own country. Very adaptable to the habits and languages of other countries, they startle by their extravagances, their mixture of grand seignior and brute, stirring curiosity, and leaving behind them the puzzling idea of something mysterious, something which the other parts of the European world never will understand.

It is only a Russian aristocrat who can penetrate the most profound thoughts of other nations. He points out all the weak spots with a Rabelaisian humor; the non-Russian always is the subject of his polite sarcasm. Laughingly and seriously he avenges Russia for the misconceptions of the world, and he takes advantage of human foibles wherever he meets them. A wealthy American was the laughing-stock of the Russian *jeunesse dorée* a few years ago. The American, traveling with his wife and daughter, met in Moscow a genuine Russian prince. Father, mother, and daughter made the most of this precious acquaintance, and when the prince suggested that they stay for the season in Moscow, the American millionaire, desirous of showing the Russian aristocracy what American money

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could buy, looked for the best palace on the market. The Russian Prince saw his opportunity to get out of some nagging debts, and he drove with the family to find a suitable residence. With critical eyes the Americans glanced at the rather plain dwellings, finding nothing that was promising until the carriage stopped before a government building, which, with its closed windows and drawn curtains, gave the impression of being uninhabited. The American liked the noble-looking house, and he liked the hilly place on which the palace is erected. He liked even the two tiny "shield-houses" on each corner of the palace, built for the special bodyguard, as the Prince explained. A bodyguard! That would be a new experience for the American, and he asked the prince to help him purchase the palace. The prince smiled. Even though it was a government building, where the president of the ministry resided when he came to Moscow, why could not this house be bought for a few days? There was no danger of the ministers' coming at that time, and the prince gave a handsome tip to the superintendent of the palace, who made no objection when he led the family through the vast

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rooms, which were not wholly satisfactory in the way of furnishing. The American lady decided to have more rugs on the floors and to add many draperies. In the big ball-room life-size portraits of the czar and the czarina met with favor. When the treasures of silver were shown, the millionaire was ready to buy the house, and the prince not only made the arrangements for the first payment, but he insisted on giving a dinner party that night. The superintendent, knowing the extravagant vagaries of the gay prince and being silenced by money, helped to prepare for the banquet. The party was extremely gay. The prince introduced as his guest his lawyer, who took charge of the big check given by the American. After a delicious Russian dinner, with vodka and champagne, the family was driven back to the hotel to pass the last night before taking possession of the palace. Alas! the next day the prince had left the city, and a note expressed his regret that, despite all efforts, the government building was not available. He had gone to the Caucasus, where he hoped to find a castle which would be more worthy of the refined taste of the ladies. Afraid of being laughed

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at, the American kept silent, and Moscow was greatly amused by the story, which did not do any harm to the scoundrelly prince.

The richest part of Russia was owned by the Romanoffs and the high aristocracy. In most cases the management of the land was left to irresponsible superintendents. It was understood that these men made fortunes out of the properties confided to them. In only a few cases, where frauds were too flagrant, were inquiries made, and then the most unspeakable conditions affecting land and peasants were exposed to the daylight.

There are parts of Russia in which many hundred thousand acres of mineral and forest lands are idle and ruined, because they are too remote from their owners, who live somewhere outside of Russia, and do not take the slightest interest in the property left to them by their ancestors. The wealth of these families was unmeasurable, and as long as a superintendent collected the rents it was a matter of indifference where he procured the money or how tenants and peasants were treated by the rascally employees who filled their own pockets, jeopardizing the well-being

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not only of the people, but of their masters. Often a discharged superintendent left an estate a rich man, and the grand seignior was ruined.

It was the dream of Tolstoy to bring the high aristocracy to such a consciousness of their duty that they would take land matters into their own hands. His dream has become a realization. Prince Lvoff, one of the five who rescued Russia, took the direction not only of the land interests of the people, but of the nobility.

Outside of Russia Russians always have discussed their own country with innumerable sighs and plans to change the politics—how to make it possible to live in Russia. Outside of Russia the noblemen were the greatest liberals and revisionists of Russia, but when they returned they crept back under the quilt of moral laxity. The home atmosphere did not agree with the ideas brought from other countries, and, then, they would have had to explain, to educate, to begin with the a b c's of reforms. Changes, they thought, would disturb the machinery of government, would trouble the people, and would not help much. The Russian's ear was deafened by every-day

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complaints, and drastic means were necessary to shake the whole system.

The spectator outside of Russia is now released from an eternal tension of wonder about what will become of the country after the war. The high-flying ideals of Prince Kropotkin have been realized. The high aristocracy will no longer be the beautiful decoration of Russia and other parts of the world. The grand seigniors will stay at home, and put into action what they so beautifully dramatized in words. They will finally look on the people as human beings, children confided to the care of those older and wiser.

It was always the greatest puzzle to the world that all the representatives of the best of Russia, living outside of their own country, had admirable qualities, many talents, an absolute taste in literature,—they are never dilettantes, but always artists or philosophers, with the wisdom of the ancient Greeks,—and yet at home they contented themselves with the most terrible and scoundrelly system, and even took part in it. The Russian aristocrat is more democratic in Russia than elsewhere, perhaps because he is the real aristocrat, the individual man, not the man who

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must submit to laws made only for the people. There were always special laws for the aristocracy in Russia, and if the Russian aristocrats had only lived up to their privileges as the real *gentilhommes sans peur et sans reproche*, the people would have been saved.

The Russian aristocrat has not quite understood his great responsibility as a sovereign in his own realm,—for the large estates are really little kingdoms,—and if the little kings had had the ambition to rule their own dominions Russia could have been an ideal state, different in political combinations, but still a model in itself, and the world would have reckoned with it as it reckons with Oriental countries. Russian culture was similar to the Russian frontier; with his first step across it the foreigner realized that he was in alien provinces.

The world has known and judged Russia by the aristocrats and the revolutionists, both arousing the greatest interest and curiosity wherever they went. And because the world has learned by these travelers something of the qualities of Russians, and found them different from other Europeans, it should tolerate and understand the

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different conceptions of life that the Russians have had and always will have. They are too original, too strong in their good and bad characteristics, to be absorbed by a political system practical in other countries. The innumerable classes of aristocrats, high and low, are composed of innumerable little autocrats. They have not the snobbishness of the younger nations with a desire to be more than they really are. They are so utterly convinced that the world consists of them, and that, therefore, nothing beside them really counts, that class distinctions have been carried to such an extreme that no Russian ever had the false ambition to enter circles to which he could not belong by birth or social position. The Russian does not feel honored to be tolerated in society; he would not go where he did not actually belong.

Russia for this reason has been the most aristocratic and the most democratic country. Social questions naturally were solved on the idea that an elephant never would seek the company of a fox. Those wonder-people of spirit and talent and genius will find their happiness in their own way, and all efforts of the world to conform Rus-

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sian politics or commercial conditions to its models must be vain from beginning to end. Russians belong to the white race, but Russian habits must be studied as Chinese or Japanese habits are studied, and even more, because the Russian is changeable in his loves and his hates. A high aristocrat, when asked which he preferred, France or England, answered seriously, "I prefer nothing which is not Russian."

How far the Russian remained Russian in his own country is illustrated in a little story. A Russian prince, a graduate of German and English universities, with a profound knowledge of all that was modern in Europe, was an enthusiastic representative of the last cry in culture. When in Russia he lived in his wonderful castle in the Crimea, where his ancestors had possessed the richest vineyards. The young prince squandered a great deal of his fortune. He squandered until he became an old prince, though he still owned his castle. Outside Russia he was a fanatic, opposed to the throne and the Russian Government. It happened that when the former Imperial family was passing the springtime in the Crimea, the czar and the czarina stopped at the prince's

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castle for its famous view. The old prince, student of Heidelberg and Oxford, the democratic aristocrat, received his sovereigns with all the honor due them. He led the empress to the little hill from which the view is most beautiful, and when her Majesty, clasping her hands, exclaimed that it was a place where she would wish to live, the old aristocrat answered with a bow:

“Your Majesty, the place is yours.”

The next day he made the legal transfer, retaining for himself only the small house in which his superintendent had lived. The prince did what his Russian grand seignioral generosity dictated despite his adopted democracy. Would he ever have turned his castle into an asylum for tuberculosis workers?

And the Russians adored their princes. They were diverting; they were the people's fairy-tales; and the more barbaric they were, the more they appealed to the imagination of their countrymen. The readjustment of Russia, with the accompanying circumstances, is likened to the French Revolution. This is wrong. The Russian people will not do away with the nobility. The good old names, which the people worship,

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are associated with their legends. But the Russians have parted from the Romanoffs. The dynasty is ended, and even if one Romanoff should be different, the name to-day is accursed in Russia. The people have been abused and oppressed by them. The Romanoffs are allied with the Siberian horrors, and as the Siberian victims—those who have not been murdered—come back, the pale and ruined witnesses of the Romanoffs' government, there can never be a place for this dynasty.

No, the Russian Revolution is not like the French Revolution. It is a revolution of a higher ideal. Intelligence and necessity coolly dominate, organizing, and not delivering *en bloc* the nobility to the wild blood-orgies of the mob.

It is the people's springtime in Russia. The traditions of an old aristocracy are as politically dead in Russia as they are in France. The Russian nobility may retire to its Faubourg St. Germain, still preserving the refined qualities that a past splendor has left it; or, what is even possible in Russia, it may mingle with the democracy, gaining reputation as a class, which is not exhausted, not degenerated, which also has suf-

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ferred and sighed under the corruption of a Government composed of creatures of the czar.

No one in the world can take away the prestige of a real nobleman, and the Russian people will recognize the real noblemen in those who were the first to join young Russia. It would be a proof of the inferiority of the high Russian aristocracy if it showed itself as an aristocracy only by the grace of the Romanoffs.

CHAPTER VII

THE GERMAN INFLUENCE IN RUSSIA— THE BALTIC QUESTION

ON the Isaacs Plaza, with the Isaacs Church of malachite in the background, is the building of the German embassy, once a fine palace, one of the best buildings in former St. Petersburg. Then a German architect rebuilt it to show Germany's latest art to the Russians. When the palace was finished, it had lost the aristocratic appearance of an ambassador's residence, but had gained new significance through the artist's triumphant idea of placing on the roof a gigantic bronze group, representing two heavy-looking, unclothed warriors leaning on two enormous horses, personifying will and strength. The Russians objected to this muscular expression of German characteristics, and demanded that the statue be changed, thus cutting off some of the power and will. It was a dramatic moment when the modified bronze group was again carried to the roof.

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All this happened one year before the outbreak of the Great War. In their amazement the Russian people were for the first time made aware that an embassy needed to demonstrate the characteristics of the people represented. The affair gave occasion for the most humorous comments, accompanied by suggestions of ways that other nations might demonstrate their characteristics. On Sundays the population of St. Petersburg wandered to the Isaacs Plaza and looked with astonished glances up to the roof, while they expressed their opinions about the mightiness of the Germans. They suddenly noticed Germany; they had never noticed her before. Germans came to Russia because Russia was a great empire where they found room and were needed, with other practical things imported into Russia. The Russians knew what German industries meant; they personally knew the Germans from having sometimes worked in the factories with them; they knew that they loved work and never drank vodka; that day by day, morning and night, they labored silently, seriously, soberly.

The efficiency of the Germans had never bothered the Russians. Germans were Germans, and

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did not know better. The German salesman was a popular figure in the little villages, where he was always anxiously awaited for the ready-made articles he carried. He knew exactly what the people wanted; he was a good man to deal with; he cheated less than the Jews, and gave credit. It was the same in the big cities, where the Germans imported French and even American goods, and it was the same in the industries, where German technical efficiency worked out astonishing results from Russian inventive genius.

Peter the Great employed Germans in his navy yards when he needed workmen who did not remain drunk for a week at a time. Catharine the Great offered lands on the Dnieper and the Volga to Germans made destitute by the Seven Years' War, and Alexander I colonized weavers of Saxony and Silesia on the Black Sea, in the Taurida Provinces, to improve the wool industry. The Germans of the time of Peter the Great became the engineers and contractors of Russia, and built ports and cities. On the Volga a wonderful fertility blessed the banks of the river, and the red-roofed, friendly little houses developed

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into communities, and the communities grew into villages and towns with model administration.

When the fleet of Catharine moved up the Volga, the empress stopped at those green, blossoming borders, enthusiastically cheered by the people of her native country. The kind, imperial woman, who, mother-like, protected and loved the clean, industrious men and women, granted them the privilege of retaining their language, their customs, and their religious faith. In the heart of Russia, on the Dnieper, the Menonites, persecuted in their own country, lived their sober, active lives unmolested, maintaining their sectarianism. No one saw any harm in the idyllic life of German colonists, who kept the privileges of former times, never abusing them, never taking advantage of the Russians. The German ants were a curiosity to their Russian neighbors, who on Sundays used to drive over to the little villages to look at the spotless streets, clean houses, and little flower gardens, as children look at a picture-book.

In time the Saxons on the Black Sea became the kings of the steppes, became Russian subjects, and, in the third generation Russians in

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flesh and blood, their model estates and their names alone recalling their German descent. One of these landowners could indulge the royal mood of devoting twenty thousand acres of land to the purpose of acclimatizing species of animals that never before had lived in Russia. For hours and hours one can drive in these enchanted gardens over land where twenty years ago grew only sod for sheep-grazing; now the rarest trees, shrubs, and flowers spread shade and coolness and beauty. All kinds of birds fly about in apparent freedom in immense aviaries, the wires of which are artistically hidden in foliage. Big and little houses are built to protect the antelopes and other animals not used to winter weather, which are of short duration in this semi-tropical part of Russia.

The owner lives as a Russian patriarch among the peasants, in the simple house of his ancestors, where the white wooden floors are scrubbed every morning, where he shares *tschi* and *bortsch* with his people. Around his dwelling are erected hundreds of clean little houses for his peasants, who take care of the grounds and of half a million sheep. All of them are the Little Russians

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of the southern provinces, and they lived peacefully and gladly under the direction of German efficiency, which is too deep-rooted in this King of the Steppes to be subjugated by Russian indolence.

In May, 1914, the czar went to visit the owner of the gardens, and passed the night in one of the spotless guest-rooms of the private house; for there is a separate dwelling where less intimate visitors are lodged and received with the largest hospitality, never intruding on the privacy of the owner. He has become too much of a Russian for that. After the czar's visit this King of the Steppes was ennobled, and he dedicated to the czarevitch the Acclimatization Gardens, a really royal present.

Less idyllic in surroundings, but tirelessly in factories, German directors, managers, and workmen labored for the Russian state. Wonderful things were accomplished, and no one had in mind that this working hand in hand could grow into a bad influence, a Germanizing of the Russians. There was nothing but the serious work of serious men who labored in common, the Russians in their lines, the Germans in theirs, and



THE FORMER CZAR PRAYING WITH A REGIMENT BEFORE ITS BEING SENT TO THE FRONT

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neither interfering with the other or creating ill will. The Germans naturally took up the work which did not lie in the field of Russian activity. The Germans living in Russia loved Russia; their hard home training relaxed in the mild discipline, and life itself revealed more of its beauty and enjoyment to them, their sense of duty not being overstrained, as in Germany. Their liking for titles and decorations was easily satisfied, and they were the last who would have changed the situation by mixing in Russian politics. No one spoke about "influence."

From time to time *chauviniste* newspapers or fanatics would start a Panslavistic demonstration against the Germans. This came and went sporadically without arousing special attention. Foreign societies and corporations were required to change their names into Russian, to have Russian directors on their boards, and the Germans gladly conformed to this regulation, never refusing this absolutely just demand.

Around the Russian throne history shows political intrigues in which Germans were concerned. The Empress Anna raised her favorite Byron, secretary to the Polish King Maurice of

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Saxony, to the dukedom of Courland. Peter II, her successor to the throne, exiled Byron to Siberia; and after his short reign, the Empress Elizabeth supported Maria Theresa in her Seven Years' War *against Frederick II of Prussia*. The nephew of Empress Elizabeth, the idiotic Peter III, protected German interests, and it was the greatest thought of his wife, the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, later the Great Catharine, that, despite her own German descent, she conspired *with the Russians against the German intruding spirit and dethroned her husband*. Catharine the Great did not quarrel with Frederick II, but she never let his politics interfere with her Russian policy, only enjoying a *bel esprit* correspondence with the Voltairean philosopher.

Catharine was dear to the heart of Frederick, and the court tongues tried to spin a story of her mother's tender relations with him before Catharine was born. Catharine's mother lived and intrigued at the court of Frederick whenever she could, but her daughter never permitted her to go to Russia.

German princesses married Romanoffs. One of them, the Grand Duchess Helène, a Princess

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of Würtemberg, gathered German spirit, art, and music about her, and German diplomacy. Bismarck was then ambassador at St. Petersburg. The political giant had a penchant for Russia, and understood how to stroke the Russian bear behind the ears. He wanted the powerful neighbor to be on most friendly terms with Germany, knowing how deeply German interests lay in Russian soil. Bismarck's warning not to provoke Russia might ring in many German ears to-day. His policy was repudiated by the "new course" and his fundamental wisdom by empty words.

The first of August, 1914, dawned and Russia was one of the arenas into which alien nations were thrown before the liberated bestiality of man. Germans, petrified, looked on the friends of yesterday, who had become the persecutors of to-day. The Russian mobs, inflamed by vodka and bribes to a mad fervor of patriotism, marched to the German embassy in Petrograd, looted the palace, killed the last German official, and rushed to the roof, from which they threw down the enormous bronze group, representing force and will, dragging it to the Moika, a little river near

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by, into which they flung it with much howling and cursing.

Under the blinding and infuriating spirit of war everything that was German or of German origin was driven out pitilessly. The high-placed directors and managers of state plants, factories, and banks, the master workers, the laborers, most of them naturalized or Russian born, were chained together like criminals without any regard to age or position or titles and sent to Siberia. The people reveled in vandalism and would have robbed and pillaged the houses of their kinsmen, without consulting their feelings, if the word had been given, just to satisfy the lust of the hour. Excellencies of yesterday were arrested and shot, if denounced by a muzhik. Germans were free game in those days; but who would imagine that the red-flamed war hyena would seek the peaceful little spots on the Volga and the Dnieper? In the warm ripeness of those August days, when the flowers blossomed in the little gardens, when the fields waited for the harvest in their golden fertility, when the red-roofed houses seemed to slumber in the quiet of midsummer warmth, the bloodthirsty beast dragged the

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people to icy regions as prisoners. They are gone forever, those blessed colonies which Catharine loved, their happiness buried, and the results of century-long industry obliterated. In their blind rage the Russians have hurt the memory of their greatest empress and benefactress. And in the Taurida Provinces, where from an ennobled Russian of German descent the czar had accepted a princely present, the police hunted for the landowner's brother, a naturalized German who had gone to the Black Sea to pass the summer in the home of his old mother.

After German interests, German vitality had been crushed, suddenly, like a ghost, invisible, but surely felt, roamed a German party which advocated a separate peace. It was said that the trail of this party led to the throne, the czarina being a German princess. Whenever the czarina had an attachment to her native country, it was drowned in the strong current of Russia's moral influence. As Empress of Russia she had to give up her own self, in truth and in faith, to Russian interests in church and state. It may be that the czarina was suffering in the depths of her heart through this war which has put her

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brother and sister in the ranks of the enemy,—this was her holy right,—but first of all she was the sovereign, the mother of her country, the mother of the future czar. Why should the czarina, who never had mixed in state affairs, suddenly excel in Machiavellianism, and why should Rasputin, who was illiterate, whose conception did not cross the spiritual borders of Russia, have been her instrument? Was there no minister, no statesman who could represent the czarina's intrigue?

The czar's great longing for peace was never a secret, and when he saw that military disasters were irreparable, when, after Gallipoli, he saw that the promise of the Dardanelles was postponed indefinitely, the desire filled his heart to see the war tragedy end. Rasputin spoke the language of the people,—no people wants war,—and he strengthened the czar in his desire. Though Rasputin possessed the great power of the ignorant, he had learned enough to know that the desire of a czar is a delicate thing, which can not be prematurely exposed to political discussion. The people were not permitted to speak peace, to think peace; their energies were directed

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to war. Less and less the people who reflected could find out the reasons for the continuation of the struggle, and when every hope for their own gain was gone, they were merely allies, merely men to die for the policy of the Entente, which they did not understand.

Then the revolution came. The people awakened to the real sense of this war, to the war without victory, as the President of the mother democracy of the United States declared, to the war for the people's holiest rights, their liberation from gray autocratic despotism. But why should the Russian suddenly seek the German influence in the misery of the country, in its failure? The Russian army lacked the same spirit in the Russo-Japanese War and suffered under the same conditions.

There are no longer Germans living in Russia who have not been interned; therefore the German influence must come from the Baltic Provinces. The Baltic Provinces—that is an entirely different question, a question by itself. It was in the thirteenth century that German knights first entered the land on the Baltic Sea,—Livonia and Esthonia, for Courland then be-

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longed to the Kingdom of Poland,—conquered the inhabitants, and forced the Christian religion on them. To-day the people of the Baltic Provinces are mostly Lutheran. The knights took possession of the land, obtaining their rights first from Sweden, under which sovereignty they lived until Peter the Great conquered the provinces and granted them the same rights from Russia. They remained German, kept their language, and brought the Baltic Provinces to high culture. They reigned on their estates like dukes, keeping the original people, the Esthonians and Letts, in a serf-like condition. They fortified their castles, built cities with German administrations, and were recognized as a free people, with their own laws and privileges.

Beside the knights who developed into the haughty Baltic barons that sat above all in the councils there was evolved a class of German patricians like those of medieval Germany. These patricians were strictly classified as burghers, who under certain rules admitted the people into their guilds and thus into their professions.

The Baltic Provinces flourished. Agricul-

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ture, industries, and commerce extended widely, and science had its home at the famous university in Dorpat. The Baltics belonged to Germans of the highest type.

Their rights were respected by Peter the Great and renewed by Catharine, who made courtiers of her German subjects. Baltic noblemen were called into Russian governmental and court affairs. They were known and esteemed by all the czars as the most loyal and trustworthy subjects.

The Baltics remained unmolested until 1880. The divergences between the Russians and the Baltics broke out as a natural result of different opinions in regard to their duties in official positions. The Baltic was not pliable, a hard, but just, administrator, and could not adapt himself to the earlier standards which implied a flourishing system of graft in the Government. Under the reign of Alexander II the tension between the Russians and the Baltics became unbearable, and when among the growing anarchism of the Russian youth the searching police discovered a Baltic, the treachery of the German-speaking subject was exploited. Prince Shahavskoy, the Governor of Esthonia, after having been de-

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nounced by Baltic aristocrats for bribery and protection in railroad affairs, avenged himself, and a terrible period of suppression of everything Baltic began. The Baltics were no longer tolerated as German subjects under the sovereignty of the Russian czar; they had to declare themselves entirely Russian. Their mother-tongue, in which their children had been taught, was suddenly prohibited. A terrible confusion began to take place. Officials of the German city administrations were replaced by Russian bureaucrats. The street names appeared in signs, which neither Esthonians nor Letts nor Germans could decipher. The Baltics were shadowed constantly, and the slightest opposition was exaggerated to a state crime. Spies of the Government and of the police lived unsuspected in harmless families, sat among the children in school-rooms, sat in the church pews, sat among the university students. The victims of this terrorizing system were seized, taken to the fortresses, and often disappeared, without any trial, into the darkness of Russian prisons or were deported to Siberia. The system did not help to make the Baltics more

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loyal. The spirit of opposition grew among the intelligent until it became open revolt.

Alexander II had no power, being himself restrained by the system which he hated. He could not free himself, and was helpless to prevent the inforcement of the new laws that the Russian Government imposed upon this free people. Among clergymen, teachers and students the *ochrana* operated mercilessly. To be denounced by a peasant, whose word in Russia would have been less than the barking of a dog, was sufficient cause for the arrest, without question, of a Baltic. Sometimes it took years for the desperate family to find out where the father, son, or husband lived, or whether he had been simply executed. This was the great Baltic tragedy.

One of the greatest of Baltic physicians was put to trial because a Russian workman accused him of having declined to attend the peasant's wife in childbirth. In this case the police feared to arrest the physician because of his popularity, and he was permitted to give a reason for his failure to go to the woman. The doctor remembered the call of the man, and remembered also

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that he had a strong reason for sending the man to his assistant, who unfortunately could not be found, but he could not recall exactly what that reason was. The whole city was in an uproar, and a kind of revolution was expected. The Germans and even the Letts had decided to revolt against the arbitrary system of the police, but the police merely sneered at the possible uprising and decided to make a good capture on the day of the trial.

The wife of the physician, in deepest distress, stood at the window gazing out into the dampness of the November day when suddenly a young woman in the street looked up and greeted her laughingly. The face seemed to the wife a godsend, and she rushed down-stairs to ask the young woman into the house. Yes, it was she who had been ill of childbirth fever and who had been nursed, through the kindness of the doctor, day and night. She remembered well enough the kind wife who had come to her, bringing refreshments. Suddenly the physician's wife knew why her husband could not help another, why he had to send away the man just as he was entering the carriage to drive to the suburb

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where he had saved the life of the little mother ill of childbirth fever.

The young woman, a real Russian and the wife of a small government official, gladly appeared at the trial, and her testimony freed the physician, who had been for a long time on the black-list and would have been just the right person to use as an example.

The Baltics breathed heavily under the strangling of their freedom. When Alexander II was murdered, his son, Alexander III, disdainfully scratched out with one penstroke the old privileges of the Baltics. It was then, that hundreds of Baltic noblemen left the provinces, to become again, what their ancestors had been, German subjects. Those whose interests were buried in Russian soil and who could not leave the country submitted to the new régime with teeth set together.

Their rights, their laws, their language, and their university were taken from them. They had to be Russian; their children had to be untrue to their own blood. Their existence became a lie; they sinned against the holy law of race. A nation never can love what its ancestors hated.

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A nation can not build peace and happiness on old distresses.

Despite the submission of the Baltics to the new conditions, those who had been deported were not pardoned, but their families were permitted to share their exile. The Baltics suffered silently. They accepted the terrible change with the dignity of a cultivated people. They entered the Russian state service and became loyal subjects of the czar. His personal bodyguard was composed of Baltics, whom he knew he could trust, for a Baltic never broke his oath. The Baltics became the most able officials in the Government and the best officers in the Russian army. But these Baltics, who became more Russian than the Russians, denied their own souls, and what they had suffered in the surrender of their own freedom they made their Esthonian and Lett subordinates suffer. They never had been mild masters, and had treated the natives of the country which they had conquered and oppressed as the Russian treated his serfs or even worse. The Russian had always had a patriarchal feeling for his serfs, was kind and condescending, and the

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serfs were devoted to the house to which they belonged.

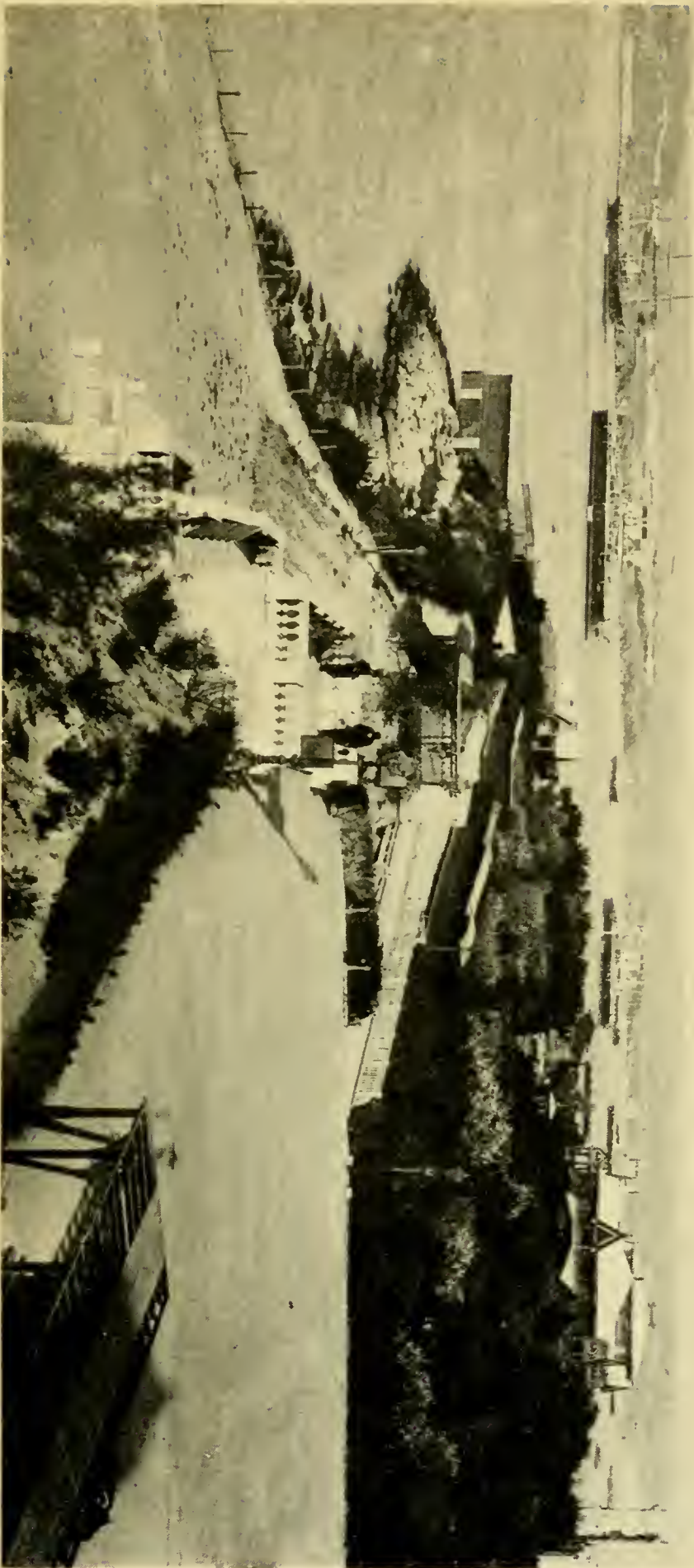
Beneath their cringing subordination the Esthonians and Letts hated the haughty Baltics, who stepped over them as if they were insects, who never took the slightest interest in their well-being, and who looked at them as they looked at the animals belonging to their estates. Like the animals, they had their stables; they had food, they even had schools, but they had no love. In the cold repudiation of them as a human class they suffered from a terrible hopelessness. Childlike, undeveloped, and frightened, these people were always on the defensive. When it was brought to the attention of the Baltic barons that in these watching serfs slumbered a terrible latent danger ready to break out at any opportunity, they laughed disdainfully. Those animals, those cowards, who for centuries had been trampled under foot, had lost the courage to stand up against their masters.

The Baltics did not see the looks of hatred which flashed in the narrow little eyes when, in the middle of the night, the Lett servants were

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awakened out of heavy sleep after a hard day's work to harness sleighs and to drive the barons, the junker's gay parties, through the icy, glimmering woods. On the sleighs, which were harnessed as the Russian troika, the footman had to stand behind the seats with crossed arms. Drunk with weariness, the icy air striking their faces, the poor boys were often overcome with sleep and fell from the sleighs speeding over the frozen snow. No one would notice that a footman was lost, and the boy would lie on the ground to sleep his last sleep. The next morning, perhaps, an over-anxious father or mother would go out to seek a son, and would find him frozen. Sometimes they would find him only when the snow had melted away, or they would find him devoured by wolves. The barons forgot these little incidents, but they were deeply engraved in the hearts of the people.

The Esthonians and Letts waited patiently for their hour to come, and the hour struck. In the midst of the confusion of the Russo-Japanese War, in the midst of raging internal revolution, the Esthonians and the Letts slunk up like wild beasts, a community of revolutionists of their



SEBASTOPOL, CRIMEA

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own. It was a peasant war, cruel and frightful, not less barbaric than those of the Middle Ages, where knights were speared on pitchforks, where castles were burned and pillaged, and before the eyes of their mothers children were thrown into the flames. It was a terrible avenging of humiliation against haughtiness. This people had been thwarted in their ambition to take part as human beings in the progress of the world. If one spoke of a man who asked for some distinction, the Baltics always said: "He is only an Esthonian or a Lett. He does n't count."

While the Esthonians and the Letts hated equally the German and the Russian, they preferred the Russian's compromising character to the knouting discipline of the German barons; and when the crater of hatred opened, it spit fire and poison over the German masters who had to be protected by Russian soldiers from a people that nominally belonged to provinces they had dominated not only materially, but morally and in spirit. The proud castles, strongholds of culture in primitive Russia, were razed to the ground.

The Esthonians and the Letts are the sworn

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enemies of the Baltics and always will be. In this the original population of the Baltic Provinces is not absolutely wrong. The Esthonians and the Letts never had justice. They were dependent on the good-will of their enslavers, who humiliated them, arousing their bad instincts instead of teaching them to conquer their base qualities. Even for their devotion the noblemen had only a cruel contempt, and an incident in the peasant revolts will always remain in the memory of the Letts. One of the high aristocrats had to flee through night and fog to save his life and his family. The servants, all Letts, generously helped those who had been their masters to escape from the infuriated peasants who stormed through the country from estate to estate, killing, murdering, and robbing. When the noble family left the estates, Count K—— promised the old butler, who guarded the abandoned castle, the greatest reward if it should not be demolished by the hordes. The old man did his best, but he could not prevent the wing containing the precious library from being destroyed by fire. After the revolt Count K—— returned under the protection of the Government, and when he

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discovered the loss of his books he became enraged. Instead of being grateful to the servant who had helped to save the other part of the castle, his first act was to execute his old butler by hanging him to a tree in the courtyard.

In the Baltic race is a strange mixture of the highest moral sense, the loftiest ideals, and the firmest will power, an intellectuality more creative than in other Germanic races, an individuality untouched by Prussianism, a wildness of temperament, a sharpness of wit, and the haughtiness of a race that has always been masters.

In the Baltics the Lutheran spirit had dominated, suffocating beauty and charm, and secluding woman in the dull insignificance of the German chatelaine of the Middle Ages. The women lived for housewifely duties, practising the strictest economy for themselves, while the men enjoyed separate existences. Nowhere was the natural difference between the male and the female so obviously expressed as among the Baltics. They brought to mind the proud-plumaged male and the gray-feathered female among the birds. The women were not attractive, with their thin, flat bodies clothed in self-woven coarse material

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of an offending simplicity and ugliness, pressed into bodices with innumerable buttons in the front; with their colorless hair drawn back from foreheads always too high and too square; and with the little lace bonnets that brides as well as matrons had to wear to express the dignity of the married state. Intolerant of everything that was graceful and free-minded in womanly spirit, they persecuted charm wherever it could be found, while they forgave the immoralities their own men committed as masters on the big estates. With a heroic self-mastery the Baltic noblewomen bore the escapades their men indulged in outside their castles; but their dominion was sacred ground, and the strictest decorum had to be observed when once inside the gates.

Oh, the domestic tragedies when a Baltic took home a wife from another country, a woman with another spirit, with artistic or modern education! Her brilliant feathers were plucked out by the jealous gray hens, and before she was aware of it she was squeezed into the coarse, moth-colored clothes, the emblem of her dignity. If she tried to fly away, she was lost forever, and her name was erased from the family chronicles.

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The Baltic noblewoman has held high the banner of female virtues, extinguishing the best in herself and the best in her men—humanity and the kind tolerance which are much more than the cold sense of duty.

The Baltics are about to die out. They live outside their estates, being German subjects, which means to be no longer individual men but uniformed. They are the low and high officials in the Russian Government. They are in the army. They are the most chauvinistic Russians and the most dangerous, their acquired Russian characteristics not being excusable because of Slavic origin. It seemed less a sacrifice for the Baltics to be under Russian sovereignty than to submit their haughty manners to German discipline: and their methods of treating subordinates were much easier to exercise with the servile Russian than with the socialistic German.

The race has naturally suffered from intermarriage with the Russian. This crossing was not an improvement for the moral qualities, and in the last few years the Baltics have shown more degeneration among the nobles than for the preceding seven centuries. Among them have

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been gentlemen murderers, gentlemen traitors, and many of the descendants of the proud families are moral victims of racial mistakes.

It is a mistaken idea that the German influence could ever overwhelm the world. It was not the fault of the individual German that so many mistakes in tact were made. It was the fault of a German Government which was too young, too ambitious not to show off wherever Germans settled after the fatherland had become an Empire. Their growing power went to the Germans' head as young wine; and beside this, they had the idea of defending their young nobility as the parvenu always does. And also, like parvenus, they used too much of their elbow power, too much space; spoke too loudly and they appeared always as a compact mass. It was, as the Russian said sarcastically: "If two Germans come together, they immediately form a quartette; if four, they found a *Gesangs Verein*; and if eight, they unite in the *Sänger Bund*. Wherever a German lives and sees his advantages, if conditions are favorable to him, he is inclined to accept the habits of the country, the language and the traditions. Wherever he settles the German

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will be to a certain extent an educator, but he will never be either feared or loved. At his best he will be accepted and respected. Germans among other races are like teachers with their pupils. The boys anxiously wait for the opportunity to play tricks, and as teachers rarely have sufficient sense of humor to smile on school-boy pranks, the Germans make the mistake of whipping.

The German language was a habit to the Russians, a comfortable institution; but it has been used only as a commercial means of communication. The Russian aristocrat spoke French, wrote his letters in French, and even introduced French words now and then when speaking Russian. When the war broke out signs were displayed everywhere forbidding the use of the German language on penalty of terrible punishment. At the Russian frontier travelers beheld these signs before they were permitted to leave the cars, but the first words they heard on Russian soil from the lips of the lugubrious-looking customs official was the question, "*Haben sie nichts zu verzollen?*" ("Have you nothing to declare?") A Norwegian traveling in Russia took the train

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from St. Petersburg to Moscow. The Norwegian shared the compartment with a Russian general. The general, a talkative old man, looked scrutinizingly at his silent traveling companion, and recognizing him as a foreigner, asked if perhaps he understood Russian. The Norwegian shook his head. "Then perhaps you speak French?" the old general continued, uneasy at the thought that he might have to pass many hours with a dumb vis-à-vis. The Norwegian smilingly answered that he did not even speak French, but perhaps the general could speak English? Then the general shook his head. No, he did not understand English. Then with a sudden gesture the general shut the door of the compartment, turning a terrible look on the Norwegian as he whispered: "*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*" The Norwegian answered timidly that he knew a little German. The general sighed as if liberated from a great weight and said: "Thank God! then we can have a good chat together." Indeed, he chatted in plain German about innumerable official and military secrets, complaining, swearing, accusing, drinking the forbidden vodka and even champagne

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out of a tea-cup which the guard poured from a teapot. At the end of the journey the general assured the Norwegian that he had had a very pleasant time.

In Russia there was no German influence to destroy; there were only German interests which were closely intertwined with the Russian. Industrially and commercially, Russia suffered terribly at the beginning of the war when deprived of German skill and help; many factories had to be closed, and in certain parts of Russia trade was entirely stopped. Indeed, German interests in Russia are destroyed forever or for many years to come. The life-work of many is gone, and another priceless thing, the confidence between the two nations, which, paradoxical as it may seem, was rooted in an innermost understanding, the German's love of Russia for her philosophy, her art, her poetry, and her melancholy. When the German becomes drunk he sings sad songs; when the Russian is drunk he weeps and talks philosophy and is deeply melancholic.

Russia is an immense grave for the peaceful achievements of centuries.

CHAPTER VIII

AMERICA AND RUSSIA

To the Russian's imagination nothing is so vivid, so exciting, as the idea of America. To his mind it has not been the country to which one takes a wrecked existence, a broken life, or where one goes for adventure, to find gold and everything that a man can buy with gold. It is not that. For him it has been like a light, like a star of hope, like a heaven on earth, vast, but not with the vastness of his own country, which is frightening, but with the vastness of the sky, gay and blue, full of sunshine and brightness. Even though the Russian never may go to America, that it exists has made him glad in the consciousness that, if his own land should make him too unhappy, he would be welcomed in another part of the earth as a human being, as a simple man.

In Russia many, many speak of America, the poorest, the most desperate, those who have been so hopeless that they have lost the strength to go

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away from their own soil. This one thought has seemed vastly comforting to them, that America was discovered for the poor, and was not the land of the rich only. They must preserve this hope that America is the great mother, with wide-stretched arms, ready to receive children, many children, from all parts of the world.

The real, the true Russian is not an emigrant by nature. He does not like to move; every change frightens him. He is not curious, and new things do not touch him. His interests are deep in the Russian soil. He must know who are his friends or his enemies and he must talk about them; otherwise, life would lose its charm for him. Those who have emigrated from Russia have been in most cases the Jews, the Galicians, students who fled for anarchistic reasons, refugees whose families were involved in unlucky politics, and aristocratic soldiers of fortune. It is very seldom that the Russian peasant is to be found among the emigrants.

And when one of the peasants, devoured by an unappeasable longing to catch a glimpse of the earthly paradise which America seems to be, dares the adventurous journey, he travels thou-

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sands of miles to go somewhere over the Russian border. Then again he travels through a foreign country, where he is completely lost, owing to his lack of knowledge of the language. Finally, he is passed over the gangway to the immense boat which is to carry him across the sea; then his heart beats faster, and he forgets the weariness and hardships of the journey. He sighs deeply, his eyes are directed forward with the movement of the boat, he clasps his hands, and his lips move in a silent prayer. The ship cuts the high waves, and over him is the immensity of the sky; he feels that in this holy solitude of the elements a man is so poor and small a thing that there are no longer differences among those who go out to America.

Day by day he sits beside his bundle, his poor property, staring silently into the vanishing hours which drop into the sea. Every morning more of space is between him and his own land, and every day a piece of his memory disappears, until finally his soul is filled with expectations of the future, and the past has left him completely. Then hours come when the sky is darkened and the clouds are restless. An anxiety never felt before enters his heart, a fainting weariness

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before the cruel impenetrable wildness of the sea. Deathly tired, he has no resistance, and gives up the little struggle before so enormous a grave.

The Russian sighs and thinks. Every one must pass through a test to reach America, and he makes himself ready for his entry; he prepares himself for the solemn hour when his foot will step ashore. It is night again. The big boat is suddenly quiet, its tireless machinery stopped. But no sleep touches the eyes of the Russian, who looks in deepest bewilderment into the clear, summer night, from which stands forth the statue of a woman, not an icon, not the Holy Little Mother, but a woman great and triumphant, kind and serious and protecting—Liberty, America! And behind the statue there lies an enchanted city, with buildings soaring into the sky.

With the dawn the Russian goes back to the place where he can make himself clean. He has the idea that it is Sunday, and it will be like entering a church. People will look at him; his hair must be brushed, his face washed, and his high boots shining. There, at the first view of America, he feels like a human being, equal to all who are on the boat with him. He can not

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speak to them, but they all have the same expression in the eyes as they look forward to the wonders to come.

Then a veil covers all the wonders of the new world. The Russian rubs his eyes; the veil remains. He sees persons, gay and happy, leisurely walk over the gangway, and he sees others who are not permitted to leave the ship. A rope is drawn between the favored ones and many poor men and women who, like himself, are waiting impatiently to go on land. His eyes question. Why are some free to land and why not all? He gets his answer when he and the others from the steerage are pushed like sheep into a hall at Ellis Island. With head bent he enters America. The wonderful expectation is killed in him; a dull, submissive expression comes into his face.

It is only a world of illusion, this new, redeeming world; it does not exist in reality. Reality is the same as in Russia, the difference between those who have money and those who have not. The poor are examined to find out whether they carry diseases from the Old World, and the rich, who perhaps do carry them, are allowed to spread

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them in the New World as in the Old. As he is a Russian, he understands and is sad. The next day, when he is free to leave the island and to enter the real new world, New York, his hopefulness has shrunk, and his eyes, which were so eager, are tired. He walks through the long stretch of streets with another man who shows him where the Russians live. This Russian quarter is poor; it is the same as in Russia, only it is confusing. The Russians have to learn English, and so they mix together. They do not look happy, but they all hope to be happy when they can go back home with what they can earn in the new country—money, as much as they want. They will buy land and houses for the children.

The Russian sees that there is a will and an energy that were not in Russia. He goes about, asks and asks, and nobody can understand him. Those who might understand him have forgotten the language of the Russian soul; they have no time to answer. A Russian who no longer has time to answer questions of the heart, who hurries away in the morning and who comes back in the evening tired, looking out only for his food and his bed, is no longer a Russian. The new-

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comer finds himself alone, and a great homesickness takes possession of him and paralyzes him. There is no beauty, no rest, no happiness. There is a uniform, nervous rush, and what is from the old home-country seems no longer to interest them. They smile pityingly when he speaks of what he thought America would be—the paradise. He knows better now. There is more of paradise at home, where they have their little places, and sometimes think that the ground belongs to them as well as to their masters. They tramp along the country roads, and the doors of the houses are opened for them; everybody talks, everywhere a cabbage soup is ready for them, and Russia is like a big, big home. He looks at his rubles, which he has brought with him. They are melting like his expectations; almost nothing is left.

He meets the disapproving looks of his own people. He who is so strong, why does he not go to work, too? There is work in America if one wants it, and this is the great thing here. The more work a man has, the more he loves the country. He loves the week-days better than the Sundays, which are dull. The working-peo-



THE BLESSING OF THE WATER
By the former czar and the holy synod on the bank of the Neva

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ple are too tired to gather, to dance, or to sing.

No, the new-comer is not in haste to work. He will go about and see where the wonders lie; he can not believe that America has only work, nothing but work, waiting for the children who come from an Old World where they have no promises, no prospects. He walks days and days, and he sees that there are streets for the rich and streets for the poor, and he sees that the poor and the rich never mingle. He sees that there are many who look neither poor nor rich, and are not gay, but noisy. He stands and looks at the sky-high houses and the stream of people that rushes in and out; he sees the faces tense and worried; he returns to his sleeping-place. And he has not discovered America.

One morning he has only a few copecks left, and misery has come to him. Oh, what a misery! It does not mean so much the hunger of the body as hunger of the soul. Nobody asks him if he is hungry, nobody cares if he dies, nobody has a word of compassion; for all this nobody has time. He lies on his bed day after day and becomes weak; he will never see his own country again,

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and he has never seen America. And one day he has no bed at all. He could not pay, and the man who wanted his bed could pay. Desperate and deserted, he takes his small bundle. He has the one desire to be home again, away from the merciless, rushing world, which is like the sea itself: those who are not able to swim will be drowned pitilessly. But to go home he must have money, and for this he has to go to work. As he is no longer strong and beautiful and full of expectation, work is hard to get. He must accept any sort of hard labor until he comes to the work that he did in his home country. And the day when he sits in the workshop with the work he is used to before him he thinks that he has found America. He concludes that every one must discover his own America—the America of his ambitions. America is like the big machine which worked at home in the fields separating the chaff from the wheat. Now he knows the difference between Russia and America. In Russia they always have time to wait. The father waits, the children wait, and so the generations wait, and the country and everything else are behind.

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The Russian brings his foreign skill into the uniformity of the workshop, and this is liked by Americans. Suddenly he is aware that he is different from others and that which his father and grandfather waited for has come to him. He discovers in himself all sorts of possibilities which he never felt before. He is strong again, stronger than ever before. There is something new in his blood, which he never would have felt in his own country, neither he nor his children, because it is not demanded, because they could live without any effort. They could have their tea and their soup and their bread, and they had time to talk about religion. Everything remained just as it was when his fathers were serfs. America opens his eyes, and with doubled energy he works to make money so that he may go back to teach his children what progress a man may make. And then it is true that there are no class distinctions in America, because the poor of yesterday can be rich to-morrow, and the illiterates can become the teachers if they study. No matter what he has been or from what he comes, a man may rise.

The Russian writes home, if he can write, or a

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neighbor writes for him, and tells about the wonders of America and how much he has in the savings-bank. Ellis Island is not the invention of a cruel Government, and America cannot be plucked like a bird.

America is the model school for Russia in which to learn everything that the Russians lack. Into the remotest parts of Russia the idea of America has penetrated—an idea of a new encouragement for a stronger expression of life.

America is so strong that it pulverizes nationalities. As nationally strong as Russians are in their country, where no room is left for the influx of another people, in America they are scarcely noticeable. But what is noticed strangely interests the American. A Russian is to the American like a book with seven seals, and if the book is opened, the American cannot read the mysterious signs; he cannot read in the Russian what he reads in other people. Russian characteristics are not comprehensible to him. He calls the Russian inscrutable. The American does not like contradictions; his mind is straightforward. The food for his soul as well as for his body must have the simple wholesomeness under-

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stood and consumed by the masses. This is the great difference between Russia and America, that Russia has no care for the masses, only for the individual man. This has expanded in the Russian a finesse of art, literature, and music, and for the Russian only. What a tremendous value must lie in this individual art! What great charm the Russian art must exercise over Americans when they feel a longing to penetrate to the soul of a people! It is this that Russia gives to America for the stimulus of energies that America bestows on her. In the closer approach of the two peoples lie enormous possibilities.

The Russian cannot be Americanized, and this is the great advantage. The race always takes to America its originality and will keep that originality even when the heart is remote from Russia. With great simplicity and sincerity the Russian marches in the columns of America's immigrants. He never disturbs his neighbor, and is more intelligent than the Jew. Like the American, he is tenacious in business, and trading with the Russian is still a disquieting puzzle. Even though many things may be changed now, neither the Russian merchant nor his character-

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istics in trading can be changed. There is one remarkable likeness between the American and the Russian: both are like children who always seek to get the bigger end. The American is even slower in his business resolutions—if it is business and not gambling—than the Russian. The American talks business without talking business. He talks over and over things, and has the same time to waste as the Russian. The Russian shows that he is in no hurry, while the American always piles up appointments, apparently to keep him busy. The Russian has one business in mind, and he pursues it tenaciously and frankly. It must be known that the Russian does not believe in business *carte blanche*; there must be some tricks in it, or it would not be business. And with all his honesty, a Russian would not admit any advantage that might lie in a business for him.

Russians never will have trustees. They have coöperative companies, which buy necessary materials more easily and more quickly than the individual man. The cash—a Russian never has cash. He has property, but to get cash he has to borrow or sell. The whole Russian mercantile

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business is based on a system of long credit. It is hard for an American to understand this, but it is harder to accustom the Russian to pay cash. It is even a danger for a Russian to have a certain amount of money at his disposal. He immediately buys what he likes and not what he needs. This is the reason that the Jews and the Germans had such a good time trading with the Russians. They knew the national weak point and played on it. The German merchant always had in his shop what the Russian liked, and if the Russian went to buy what he needed, at the same time he bought something he liked. The German wrote it in the big book, and the Russian never needed cash. Sometimes the Russian's whole harvest was taken away, or his sheep or wood or horses, to give him a new sheet in this big book. The Russian was never much bothered about this. It will be different in America; he will buy only what he needs.

But Russia needs many, many things very badly. Russia's little towns are in a state of touching primitiveness, more than romantic, less than endurable. Besides a broad comfort, a waste of space,—this is perhaps something that

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would be adequate to American proportions,—is a lack of hygienic institutions worse than in Italy and little better than in the Orient. The streets are seldom paved, and in bad weather it is impossible to leave the house without danger of being drowned in masses of dirt and mud. The houses are kept warm by immense stoves, and most of them are lighted by oil-lamps which smell bad. It is regarded as a crime to let in fresh air; the houses are not heated for storm and wind, the inhabitants declare. The windows are plastered with papers, only a small pane being left so that it can be opened. In this atmosphere of human breaths, of cigarettes, of Russian leather, and of cabbage soup the Russians live through the whole winter and until late in the spring. Only when the sun begins to ripen the wheat are the windows opened and is the winter spirit let out. This is no exception at all; it is the normal state of the Russian town. The water is not drinkable; in the bath-tubs, which naturally never exist in the average Russian house, it looks brown and muddy.

The Russians have their communal bath-houses, with showers in the steam-heated rooms,

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where they lie on wooden benches. Every Saturday whole families, men, women, and children, march to the bath-houses with their samovars and big, round loaves of black bread. There they remain for hours and hours not only bathing, but washing their clothing, which can be quickly dried in the warm rooms, and ready to be put on again. They chat, drink their tea, and the weekly bath is as much an entertainment to the Russian as the motion-picture is to the American.

In Russian towns there is usually neither plumbing nor sewer. Infectious diseases, such as typhoid fever and cholera, are prevalent, and the Russian patiently endures them. That is what life brings, and no one can change it.

The houses of the peasants are indescribably worse than those of the middle class in poverty, uncleanness, and bad air. Yet the peasants are not so poor, not so primitive, not so helpless as they appear; they are only hopelessly lazy. They would like to have all conditions changed, but they do not know where to begin first. They need a Russian-American Cleaning Company; it would pay wonderfully.

Those who are to-day at the head of the Gov-

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ernment know exactly the conditions of the country; they have studied them. It is to be hoped that they will not make the mistake made by former governments, and, instead of instituting radical reforms, send commissions to investigate. This would take years, and the people, still living in old filthiness, would not readily open their minds to the demands of a new Russia. The bodies must be freed before the spirit can work properly.

America should investigate. America should send out commissions to make necessary changes. America's prosperity resulting from the war could become a peace prosperity, the result of constructive work instead of destructive work. This would assure more peace in the world than anything else. If America would go into Russia, it would become a matter-of-fact Russia, and not the country for which every other nation has a big scheme—to exploit it or to ruin it. But America will not see in Russia a country for colonization; it will be merely an outlet for American pragmatism. The American would have the liberty to work out in Russia ideas that in his own country are sometimes hampered by

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the trust system, enslaving in another way and retarding the development of a free trade. The Russian hates the idea of trusts; to him they seem nothing but a despotism limiting free commerce.

.In the immensity of his country the Russian has created his islands of trade, which have steadily flourished, old-fashioned, but sure. The big fairs are held with regularity every year, and with the same regularity represent the same merchant names. When the fathers die the sons succeed them. And between these merchants is mutual confidence. They have the proud conviction that they are providing the country from the farthest east to the west, from the north to the south.

Every year in Nijni-Novgorod, the commercial heart of Russia, all the thousand little streams of labor from all parts of the country converge. The annual fair is the most fantastic, the most primitive, the greatest demonstration of industrial Russia. All Russia gathers to buy and to sell. Nijni-Novgorod becomes a place of pilgrimage to which all bring their year's work. It never deceives. In the Russian's mind it always will remain the great, benign spot from which

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their fathers and grandfathers brought home wealth or economic independence.

In Russia is far more wealth than Americans imagine, not over-night wealth, not the dazzling heights of multi-millions, but a solid, established wealth, with the old-fashioned habit of keeping money in a trunk that is hidden somewhere, or investing it in land where treasure is deep in the earth or where there is enough timber to heat big Russia. The Russian is superstitious concerning everything that lies underground. The forces that have slept since eternity cannot be liberated without the tribute of human victims who try to lift the mysterious treasures to the daylight. It is difficult to get a Russian to labor beneath the earth. There lurk dangers unknown to him—dangers that he cannot meet with the courage of a man, that he cannot fight, avenging dangers, mythical dangers, which still exist in imagination. Russia never has had volcanoes or earthquakes, and the Russian, who knows that in other parts of the world towns disappear, is of the strong conviction that it is because the slumbering forces beneath the ground have been disturbed in their quiet secrecy. With all his super-

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stition, the Russian is shrewd enough to buy such a piece of land. Often he lies down on the ground with his ear close to the earth; he listens, and it seems to him that he can hear the spirits that would lure him to free them.

It happens that a simple man makes a journey from the Caspian Sea to the capital with a bit of sulphur in his pocket. A traveler has told him that the piece of land he owns is of the greatest value on account of the yellow stone that lies all around his mountain like a crown. Yes, he himself has seen this strange glimmering in the sunshine, and has liked it very much to look at, and sometimes he has had the idea it might be gold. Men laughed at him, and showed him how soft it was. Then he understood that it was not gold. But the traveler told him it could be changed into gold. In the capital he shows the piece of sulphur to a man at the inn, and the man takes him about; everybody seems amazed. But it requires much money to have all those fellows around, and at last, tired of all the promises, and having spent all his rubles for a stupid dream, he goes back, leaving the piece of sulphur with his address. So the valuable specimen may lie forgotten some-

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where, for the Russian is usually too indolent to form a company for exploiting latent riches.

So it is everywhere in Russia. From the Caspian Sea to the White Sea, through Siberia, the Caucasus, and the Ural Mountains, gold-mines, copper-mines, iron-mines have been opened, and the half finished work deserted because, first of all, the officers of the companies generally stole the money necessary for development. The absolute lack of organization usually destroyed any effort to disclose Russia's mineral resources. Even the coal-mines in the Donetzky district have been closed because filters were needed for the impregnated waters. Sometimes a mining-fever crazed Russia, and then companies were hurriedly formed to exploit some newly discovered virginal district. Such work has been started with all the scientific skill of Russian engineers; but after a short time enthusiasm waned in the face of unexpected obstacles or on account of the severe cold, too much solitude, or lack of amusements, and finally the Russian comes to the conclusion that life is too short to bother with mines in the wilderness. Most of

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the successful mining companies are therefore French, English, and Belgian.

What Russia has not produced for herself in iron and coal England, Germany, and even Poland sent to her cheaper and without trouble. It is known that only one-fifth of Russia's per capita need for iron is covered by domestic production. The oil-fields in Baku were unexploited until the Swedish engineer Nobel obtained large concessions. English companies have been recently organized that control many thousand acres. All these mineral lands belong to the crown, and will now be free to benefit the Russian people.

It should be understood that labor and skill are not lacking in Russia; what is needed are money and organization. Americans can achieve wonders by engaging Russian engineers and furnishing necessary capital. Russian propositions, when presented to Americans, are often declined for the reason that Americans have enough opportunities in their own young country. But Americans are confronted by the labor problem, which unquestionably will hinder them more in the future than in the past, on account of reduced

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immigration owing to the wholesale manslaughter in the European War, and, as the colonization of Chinese and Japanese is prohibited, the working of mines will be limited. In the meantime America's great ability in organizing and financing should be employed for the benefit of Russia and to the ultimate advantage of her own industries. In former Russia it was difficult to procure proper treaties. To-day the new order is too young, too effervescent, to make possible any conclusion as to how much better conditions will be. In any case, they could not be worse for foreign interests.

There is much more money in Russia since the war than there ever has been, because of the abolition of vodka and the savings of the soldiers. In 1915 the increase of deposits was more than one billion rubles. Despite all the killed, the crippled, and the missing men in Russia, there is still a flourishing manhood among the people, an inexhaustible store of health, patience, and goodwill. And there are the Jews, who in masses will overflow Russia after all restrictions are removed. They will grasp the possibilities well known to them. They will take back to Russia

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their keen intelligence and penetrating mentality. With characteristic perseverance they will take from Russian hands the reins of commerce, and Russia will be ruled by Jewish capital. Jewish industrialism will triumph over Russian national indolence. A vast field of activity is open for the Jew until the American intervenes with his strong, clear initiative.

It is easy to handle the Russian laboring classes since the abolition of vodka. In former times the Russian's reason was always drunk; to-day he will be amenable to sound arguments, and he who has been enslaved for centuries should not be left to his own childlike decisions. He cannot dispose of himself to-day; he is absolutely helpless if not directed. It is a conscientious duty to direct the free Russian workman and peasant in the right way. This is the ethical task that America will have to carry out—the task of the mother democracy to educate the young country, which suddenly from darkest autocracy has come into the light of freedom.

There is a great danger for the leaders as well as for the people; both will lose their sense of proportion. They will do things that will make

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them regret the liberty they have attained, and the result may be that, tired and exhausted, they will prefer to be again under the knout of governors or police merely to have somebody who knows exactly what they should do. It is the hour for America to help Russia, even though America has her own struggles. But America is so energetic, so wonderfully equipped, that she could help the new Russia organize, help her stand on her feet, not as a menacing colossus, but as a gigantic power guided by the spirit of light. Russians have a boundless confidence in Americans. They know that Americans are not despotic, that they are thoroughly practical, with an utilitarian ideal. They know that there is no danger that Russia will become a dependent colony of the United States, or that American influence could annihilate Russia's own interests.

Americans have many times sought trade with Russia, and have met such entirely different commercial conditions that, discouraged, they have given up; even in time of need the American and the Russian have come together in trade only through English, German, or Swedish intermediaries. The Russian peasant knew not only

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that he could emigrate to America, but he knew about American machinery, the technical wonders that had been brought to Russia by the zemstvos for work in the fields. American mechanical skill has always been a great stimulus for the inventive spirit of Russia. If a people is able to invent all sorts of machinery to save human labor, why should not the Russian, who loves to work artistically and to invent all kinds of miniature objects just for his own pleasure, be able to direct big things? Few know how many Russian inventions have gone into the world, even to America. The Germans know. They value Russian ideas, utilize them, and present to the Russian, ready-made, what he has thought out. America also knows something about the efficiency of Russian engineers. It would be the greatest mistake if Americans who take up the tremendous railroad problems of Russia imagine that American engineers could solve them. The Russian knows his own country and its labor conditions. Americans will take their ideas into Russia, and these will be an obstacle in the way of success. All Americans have to do is to use their precise and strict methods of business

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organization, their sure and solid systems of finance, and Russia will reward them by supplying raw materials cheaper than America, with her high cost of labor, can produce them.

America will discover that immigration from Russia and Poland will cease completely after the war. Jews, workmen, and intellectuals will rush back home again, to be near when free Russia shows the power of her strong limbs. To-day she shows only an acrobatic virtuosity; she gives an amazing performance without the assurance that the "pyramid of the five," who now form the government will be really the pillar upon which the well-being of the whole country can rest. While America congratulates Russia on her rise, America still lacks confidence; she is afraid that in commercial relations Russia may have unknown traps. America waits for Russia to come to her, and this is a mistake. She should go to Russia, and then will understand Russia. Now she is interested without having any vital part in Russia's commerce. She cannot see herself seriously connected with Russia without the help of the English, who now guarantee the payment for everything that Russia purchases in

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America. England does not perform this service to Russia for love only, and America would be amazed by an exact estimate of the good profit lost to her in thus always having a broker between her and Russia. In former years Germany did this work. She imported into Russia a tremendous amount of American machinery, because the Russian was stubborn, and would not accept German manufactures even though much cheaper. Germany sold to the Russians American products at high profits on long credit.

The American financial genius must find ways and means of compromising with Russian commercial ideas. The two nations must come together in a pacifist union, the world's trade. Japan is the most dangerous competitor. With English support, Japan now supplies Russia, but those who know the Russian realize that the close union with Japan is temporary and caused only by war conditions. The Russian peasant is not inclined to trade with the Japanese. He is afraid, he is superstitious. To him there is something sinister about the Japanese, too stereotyped, too polite. In the mind of the simple Russian still remains the memory of the "hell-

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stories" of the Russo-Japanese War, the tales of the thousand devils who are like leeches sucking the heart's blood of the people. With all the effort that Japan is putting forth, she never will be popular in Russia, and though the Russian is patient, he finally shakes off other races he does not trust.

The Russian does not trust the Jews. It was not only the former régime which drove the Jews out of Russia. It was the people, the idiosyncrasy of the people. The unlimited colonization of the Jews in free Russia will be hard for the Russians to accept. The Russian has a race hatred for the Jew; he cannot help himself, and it is stronger than his democratic sense of duty, which bids him accept them as brethren. The peasant knows only the Jews who nag him. Although the Jews were not in power, they found a thousand ways to force a strangling money system on the Russians. The Russian people have never fully estimated the Jewish intelligence, which is antipathetic to them. The receptiveness of the Jews, which absorbed the Russian's ideas, turned into money what had lain idle in the Russian's brain, ideas guessed or dragged out in an

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hour when the Russian was drunk from the vodka which a Jew had sold to him. The Jews took advantage of all the Russian's weak points to the uttermost. They were the white slavers of Russia, and played on the Russian's worst instincts. The peasants never will forget this influence. But these were the oppressed Jews of the past, the avenging Jews.

America will seem to young Russia more and more a redeeming factor, after all the terrible experiences of the war, through which she had to dance to various melodies played by her allies. Not by France. Russians worship the French because in their historic memory the French were the people who even in defeat left the unforgettable impression of chivalry. Can America see her moral advantage in Russia? Can she see that she will be received with open arms and open hearts? The Russians who will go back to their country will form the first bridge for trade understandings. Even if the Russian became a citizen of the United States when he had no hope of a free Russia, he will go back, and he will take with him the simple joy of working and a strict sense of duty, which is not taught in America by

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a knouting superintendent, but by the necessity of keeping up with life. The Russian knew that when he was not at work on time there was another man waiting to take his place; he was not missed, only sneered at. It is easy to get employment in America. No questions are asked; it is not any one's concern why a man works, only how he works.

It is a great mistake that the United States of America postponed the establishment of broad and close business relations until after the war. It may be too late. Free Russia may be under the economic domination of others not so advantageous either for Russia or America. Russia wishes nothing better than to give her enormous contracts and orders to Americans, who could then employ the Japanese as sub-contractors. American capital should be invested in Russia's big railway propositions, which will be guaranteed by the state and would assure big dividends. America should send out experts to investigate mineral lands and to start mills and factories. Propaganda concerning Russia's business future should inspire quick action not only for Russia's sake, but for the expansion of American

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interests in Russia. The American spirit is the only acceptable commercial spirit for Russia and the only one not destructive, not likely to undermine and to overthrow the national prosperity. The clean, clear point of view of the American will bring into the confusion of Russia's business ideas precision and practicability.

The question is, How far will Americans adapt themselves to Russian characteristics? The Russian in a foreign country has the innate amiability not to make himself conspicuous by his patriotism; he bothers no one with the misery his heart suffers in his exile. For this reason Americans may have the mistaken conception that a Russian who has lived in the United States for many years and whose children were born in the country would be too deeply rooted to go back to more primitive and less comfortable conditions. The Russian will go back. The mother has sung it to her children, and the father has promised it.

Since the police were chased away from the door-steps of Russia a vast wave of happiness has flooded the hearts of the Russians in America.

The self-sufficiency of Russia will depend on American support that is not political. It is

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sure that Russia never could be ruled by the same forms of liberty that prevail in America or at least not at the beginning; that will perhaps be the final touch. Russia must find her own policy, for Swiss, French, or American systems are not applicable to her. Russia probably will become a very democratic country with very autocratic leaders, with the knout of justice, which sometimes is more painful than the knout of despotism. Justice is a great, a terrible word. It means the enforcement of the laws, it is frightful, because in Russia the laws have never been just.

What America can do is to teach young Russia from her own experience in creating a new country. This makes America the only partner for Russia. Russia, with her vastness of untouched land, is like a new country; with her illiterates, her Caucasians, Kirghize, Armenians, and other peoples, she has her race problems like America, which is dealing fairly and wisely with them. If America's sanitary efficiency could only reach Russia, it would awaken the people to the state of human beings. And this might be the first, the greatest, and most conscientious work to be done.

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Russia and America have so much to give each other of ethical, spiritual and practical values that the alliance of which Russians dream and which the Americans once declined must come about.

CHAPTER IX

RUSSIAN ART, DRAMATIC LITERATURE, AND MUSIC

DRAMATIC productions have a greater influence on the Russians than on the people of other nations. Russians live through what passes on the stage; it even stirs the imagination dangerously, and the censor of old Russia had good reason to be careful in scrutinizing new literature.

Both the simple Russian man and the Russian woman of the world have the irresistible impulse to represent on the stage what devours their souls. It was a most impressive and unforgettable performance that took place one day in the waiting-room of a little station. The train had to stop on account of a heavy snow-storm, and the conductor announced that there was no possibility of proceeding until the storm ended. The waiting-room was filled with passengers of every class. In one corner was the typical platform before the icon of the Holy Mother, with pictures

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of the czar and the czarina flanking it. Two students, having the good idea of relieving the tedium of waiting, sprang on the platform and began to improvise dialogue. As they spoke and acted they were suddenly interrupted by a young woman, who took part as a third character in the unexpected little play. Then in one corner, lighted only by the little red flame under the icon, a wonderful comedy was logically developed, men and women understanding one another's innermost feelings, entering and leaving the scenes, and taking up their cues as if the play had been written by a great dramatist and rehearsed for weeks. They were all great artists, those amateurs, because they had something to express and because they had the natural gift for expression. Even the inevitable *pristav* listened, amused. When the dialogue became too free he groaned; but he was shaken by laughter the next moment when one of the students directed his words to a cat that had appeared on the stage at just the right moment to catch a mouse. The performance ended with the tingling of the station bell which announced the starting of the train.

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The Art Theater of Moscow started in much the same way. Men and women of society played as amateurs until they became so fascinated by the spell, which grew from their artistic ambitions, that they devoted souls and bodies to the development of the great new art with which Stanislawsky and his actors surprised the world. It is not a Russian art for Russian plays; it is universal, and therefore is for everything that has been written for the stage. And here is the point. Nothing in the world ever has been written that would not echo in a Russian soul; no thought exists that has not been buried in the colorful mind of a Russian, and it requires little to resurrect such a thought, to make it live in all the wonders of life.

The Russians were the first to act with realism, to clear the stage of old traditions, to move and to speak without the yard-high heels of false pathos. They were the first to give the stage the significance of its *raison d'être* and to exert a powerful artistic influence. In the simplicity with which Stanislawsky's actors presented the ideas of the writers was an eternal beauty that revealed the most secret intentions—intentions

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of which the poet dreamed and which he never dared to express. With his art instincts Stanislavsky enlightened the remotest meaning of the poet's fantasy and gave form to vague visions. His artistic courage stimulated not only the dramatic art of Russia, but of the whole world. He was redeeming, because he was not experimenting. He was decided in his methods. He did not hint timidly; he expressed unreservedly. With the firm brush of the great artist he put the picture of life on the stage. Stanislavsky was a conqueror. Everything paled beside the inflaming world of his invention; everything was gray beside the colors he dared to use; everything seemed mummified beside the freshness of his artistic figures. Long before Russia was freed from its enslavers it was freed in its art. For the people it was promising and consoling that Stanislavsky was loved and cheered as a national hero.

Great artistic instincts lie in the Russians. They are sincere in their emotions; emotion is the leading power of their lives. A Russian expresses everything, and everything that he expresses reflects his own soul. He writes only

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when the impulse is so strong that it bursts for an outlet, and then he pours forth the joys and horrors of his soul, which is never timid, never disguised in cowardly conventionality. Unafraid and truthful, he revealed the terrible weaknesses of his brothers. The Russian poets were for the world the greatest hope. With sacred sincerity they disclosed themselves; never draping terrible instincts with the pitiable wrapping of lies. They described Russian barbarism, with its corruption in society and politics, and gave to the world the most pessimistic view of its darkness and impenetrability, leaving to the world judgment and understanding of the holy beauty of their self-sacrifice.

Stanislawsky showed to the czar in "Tsar Fjedor," majestic cruelty, tortured humanity, the chain of terrors, which significantly was left open for the links of *Fjedor's* successors; and whoever understood the deep intentions of this interpretation knew that, with the last link of mysticism, the chain would be closed around a whole people. But like strong animals which scent danger, the people collected their last forces to burst open the rusted irons, and a whole nation



ARSINATSCHEF
Author of "Sanin"

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now advances, young, new, happy, and free. Russian poets will hang the laurel on their tragic Muse, which accompanied them wherever they wandered and wherever they rested, in the midst of the lowliest, in the midst of the highest.

Even the gaiety in Russia's dramatic art was tragic, laughter under tears, smiles under curses. The stage was always a mirror for the people. They wrote and produced only what was their own. They lashed their own conditions mercilessly, and in Russian literature are satires and sarcasms incomprehensible to other nations. Russians were interested in their own miseries, their own hopes, in their own people, their own country. Russian genius was so enlarging and enlightening that other nations partook of its grandeur. Tolstoy moved the whole world not temporarily, but for eternity; he preached a new religion, the religion of humanity, and he was the holy man of Jasnaja Poljana to whom Russians made pilgrimage. Much was known in America of this poet prophet of the Russians, and more is known of his philosophical and humanitarian system since his eldest son Ilya Tolstoy came to the United States to bring to the masses a deep

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understanding of the influence with which Leo Tolstoy anticipated the revolution. Yet Leo Tolstoy's divine hopes of happiness for his brethren were more of a biblical character, of the fulfilment of the prophecies of a millennium and his great spirit might have suffered a thousand wounds in seeing the Russians march through death to their freedom. Gogol, simple, great Gogol, was so utterly Russian, so strangely modern, that only Russians understood him; Gorky, the poet who wrote his own life as it was, had the courage not to disguise himself, but to show that he was one of the people he dramatized. Every country has its darkest part, which is all misery. What made darkest Russia fascinating to the world was that in the humblest burned a little flame of wisdom, of longing.

Dostoyevsky, who made his readers suffer, who made them shudder as no one else could, was a pitiless surgeon not only for the Russians, but for all mankind. It is so easy to be consoled with the criticism that the Russian poets exaggerated, that they only sunned their own misery, that Russian hearts and Russian ideals were torn to pieces, and that it was never so with other nations.

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People always will be consoled, always will think that terrible truths belong to their neighbors, and that they are exempt. So they read with a fever of fascination the story of Russia as told by her poets and dramatists. Having a superstition for majesty and holiness, Russian poets have never hesitated to disrobe their majesties and to exhibit their poor nakedness first, and then to make them grow vastly greater than weak mortals, to make them immortal as martyrs of the crown or of society.

What amazed the world was the fearlessness of men who braved death in writing the truth. It was a soul of wonder, this soul of the Russian poet. Will it remain the same when suddenly the Russians become happy and satisfied, when everything that their poets ardently demanded is received? Will Meretschowksky, will Alexandreieff, Arsinatschef and Kuprin, still fortunately living, answer in their new works? The pen which wrote the most terrible accusations against a country, the pen which described great horrors, which was dipped in blood, suddenly halts at the miseries of yesterday, and trembles over a white sheet of paper, after it has been

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dipped in the blue ink of the happiness of to-day.

Still, there is a great curiosity in the world to know more and more about the soul mechanism of the Russians. The outside world does not understand that they have souls without any mechanism, without any conventionality, with the impertinence of childhood, and with the frightened consciousness that they may be punished for what they are saying. The Russian who could not read or write, and who knew nothing of poetry and philosophy, was interested only in himself. He listened to the melodies of his own being, which laughed, cried, and silenced him. The song in the Russian has triumphed over enslavement, persecution, and death. The Russian folk-lore shows the serene simplicity, the original rhythm, of himself.

The Russian knows what a sky means when it is blue. He has found hundreds of melodies for this longing for a blue sky; he has found them in the darkness of the long winter nights. He adores flowers, the poor, rare blossoming of a few weeks in the year. He looks on a flower as Heaven's message, and he has many stanzas

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ready for it when it unfolds its beauty for him. He loves the sunshine; in the darkness of winter days he promises it to his children. And he worships his children, but he conceals this tenderness under a half-humorous, half-bear-like strictness; he will even slap a child or a woman so that he may not show how profound his love is.

Russian music lives not only for the elect; it belongs to all the people. It is the sincerity of the music that makes all the world that is not Russian vibrate to it without knowing why. It is the music that other nations love and fear; it is not the music to which they dance; it is not the music that the organ in the street plays.

Russians do not compose music with the sweat of their brows; they simply express themselves in melodies instead of in words. The chained men and women sang on their way to the icy solitudes of Siberia, and these songs will become sacred hymns in memory of their martyrdom. They sang in the depths of Siberian mines when they were permitted to sing, and their words often contained their stories, so that they understood one another even when they were forbidden to talk. There is a frightening beauty in those

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songs, in which the same melody returns again and again, sometimes only four notes telling a whole life story.

In the barbaric times of Peter the Great, when the czar sat in the Kremlin with his trembling courtiers, drinking, and making all around him drunk, they sang and danced to the hideous caricatures of Russian melodies that Peter had had changed into gallant songs, like those he had heard in other parts of Europe. The spontaneous cry of race pierced through minuet or gavot, but from time to time Peter would listen to another song, heard from the court below, where men of highest rank lay on their knees, their heads on a block, singing to forget the sinister moment when their souls would be sent into eternity. Listening, the czar would wave his hand to stop the voices of his creatures about him, who ghost-like stared out of the windows, feeling that their own turn at the block would come sooner or later.

Peter could not see the faces of the condemned while they sang, and he ordered that they be turned toward the window. They continued singing with a superhuman power, so that the execu-

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tioners paused, with swords in the air. Peter became impatient. The song stirred his wild blood, and he commanded his courtiers to descend with him to the courtyard to make an end of the singing traitors. Oh, those blood melodies! They have found their way back to the songs of the people, and they appear again and again in Russian music, to which mankind often listens terrified.

Like every one else in the eighteenth century, the Russian court patronized Italian music and singers, whose melodies were smooth beside the wild and melancholy Russian songs; French ballets took the place of Russian national dances, and Russian nobles were tamed to the minuet and the gavot. An old instrument, the tympanon, which had been invented for the artificial arias of Louis XIV, was brought to Russia for the great Catharine, and it was she, foreign born, who reviewed the old Russian songs on this strange kind of cymbal.

Old Russian music, old songs of war and love, have been collected and passionately interpreted with the intensity that belongs only to the Russian musical soul by young Sasha Votitchenko,

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whose cradle stood in Little Russia, where the people sang happy songs. The old tympanon was preserved in his family, and as a little boy he listened to the enchanting tunes which his father and grandfather found in the chords of the primitive instrument. In the little boy's mind arose the desire to find more and more of those wonder-songs, which make people dream, which ring wildly, and to which Little Russia danced fiery dances. He went out, a little tympanon under his arm, searching for them, like a wandering musician, to find the way into the hearts of the people, who would sing for him and would give to him what they were not willing to disclose to a stranger. But Votitchenko, young, persevering, and passionate, never saw obstacles. He found and collected treasures everywhere, in Great and Little Russia, in Siberia, in Georgia, in the Caucasus; and he revealed ancient folk-lore of beauty, treasures for the whole world. It is most wonderful how he ever achieved the miracle of uprooting some of those century-old melodies, known only by a small group of peasants in some distant corner of vast Russia, and transplanting them by the

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means of the old tympanon to the modern world. In this time of turmoil, which lacks totally the spirit, the childlike faith, and the simplicity of the past, it is strange to listen to those melodies of hope, love and sorrow in the same words that were sung by the forefathers.

Young Votitchenko wandered over Russia coming into contact with peasants who have remained in the same primitiveness of culture and civilization as their ancestors of two hundred years ago. He had to disguise himself as pilgrim monk or simple peasant. He lived in the midst of the people and lived their life. So he entered the very soul of their song, their music; for the daily life of the Russian is all music. He never separates this expression from his feelings; it is almost a religious rite to him.

Starting at dawn, with the song for the rising sun, which is quite pagan in its origin, the peasant accompanies his labor in the fields with the grand old songs of the harvest. The meadows, the brooks, and even the small birds which fly high and jubilant in the morning air, are all subjects for songs. When he returns to his home he sings another refrain; and at evening, in the pure

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and perfumed summer nights of the plains, he is inspired by the more romantic music; he sings of love or complains to the stars of his broken heart.

There is music in every phase of the peasant's simple life, and true to the always contrasting character of his nature, the same peasant who sings the most tragic love-song of passionate suffering at the next moment may dance the national dance with a wild and savage joy.

Votitchenko learned all the fantastic mysticism of this people. Their imagination, filled with old legends and ballads, with beliefs in good and evil spirits, with all the superstitions of primitives, tells the story of the reigning spirit of the forest, with his great beard and his eyes of gold. Every old woman relates mysteriously the tale of the "Flowers of Fire" which grow in the impenetrable depths of the forest, and once a year, at midnight, burn, sending an illuminating glow of "sacred fire" throughout all the woods. She has seen the reflection on the sky, and so have their grandmothers and all their ancestors. All those century-old fairy-tales are

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expressed in a music rich in color and poetry, and only to be found in the heart's melody of a wonderful people.

Having heard of a hamlet far north in Siberia where lived an old peasant who knew songs forgotten by all others, Votitchenko undertook the journey, traveling many days to the *isba* where the venerable Ostap had passed his ninety-eight years.

The old man, not different from other old men who wish to lengthen their days, shook his head. He would not sing; the thin thread of breath which still kept him alive might break. But young Votitchenko was stronger in his will than the old man. He has made the journey; he had to have his songs—songs forgotten by all, songs the old must give to him. Oh, yes, Ostap knew songs; oh, so beautiful that only the great men of his youth, nearly a century ago, could sing, and that nobody else could remember, and so the songs would die with him. The old man closed his eyes; he sank into reveries of the past, of his youth and vigor. All was silent in the modest *isba*. Peasants had entered silently to listen to

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the tympanon, which sang under the young traveler's fingers, songs they all knew and loved. Very softly, not to awake old Ostap from his thoughts, he played the melodies, to which the people moved and hummed. Votitchenko struck rich chords, and the little wooden house vibrated with the sounds of dance music, love-songs, war-marches.

Ostap, as if awakening from a long sleep, blinked at the young musician, bent forward, listening to the joyful, fiery songs, his little eyes opened wide, his wrinkled old face straightened as in a tension. Suddenly he rose, his big frame trembling like a leaf from emotion. The other peasants, moving to a corner, were struck with awe, as if they saw a vision. Grandfather Ostap had not stood up for fifteen years; some of the women crossed themselves, and a child began to cry. Old Ostap, as if far away, began first with a shaking voice, and then sang strongly and loudly. Votitchenko excitedly followed the strange song, note by note, and at the third strophe could play it fluently. Old Ostap was still standing, still singing,—but suddenly, exhausted, he fell back into his chair, his eyes stared,

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his heart beat no longer. The great old son of a warrior had expired with his song; but the song, the forgotten song, lives, and will live forever.

In strange and sharp contrast to his life among peasants and people of medieval minds and ancestors, young Votitchenko was called to Yalta. The czar was anxious to listen to the old tympanon which had once been a court instrument and now took up the immortal songs of the people. Yet there was no contrast between the simplicity of the peasant and the simplicity with which Nicholas II received the musician. There was no formality, there was no etiquette, but the same spirit as that of the old peasant Ostap and somewhat of the same atmosphere. The little czar-evitch, tenderly guarded by the simple Cossack with the childish blue eyes, had the same big smile as the Siberian peasants.

The czar asked Votitchenko to play for him, only regretting that the czarina, being ill, could not be present, as she was more musical than he. But the czar understood the melodies of his people and it will be everlastingly in the memory of the Russian Votitchenko that he found the same

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sincerity of soul and heart in the palace as in the hut.

In the country the peasants sit together and sing. Unconsciously and without any training, they form the most wonderful and most exact choruses, every one taking up a part with a natural and sure musical feeling. Nothing could be more elemental and sublime than those voices united in their expression of masculine power and feminine sweetness. The profound bass voices pour forth a whole world of strength, and nowhere else are the high-pitched sopranos of such angelic clearness. The Greek Church, in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, which mingles in the music of the mass the reconciling voices of boys and the accusing tones of men, lets only men sing its sacred melodies, lets the softness of many tenors redeem the thunders of gigantic basses, nowhere so nobly colored as among the Russian voices.

Another original form in Russian musical expression is that of the Gipsies. Unlike the Hungarian Gipsies, they do not represent the national music. These Russian Gipsies are the remnants of a bygone time, and they have kept

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their individuality without singing their own songs, which are too wild, too much a medley from all the countries through which they passed before settling in Russia. They are not Slavs. The Russian adores these Gipsies, but only when he is intoxicated by wine or joy or happiness. Then he calls them, and they sing for him strange, cheap music, popular and ephemeral, composed at the table of a café; but they sing the motives with all the passion of their own feelings in deep, emotional voices and without any instrumental accompaniment. A whole band of these Gipsies sing, old and young, ugly women, witch-like, neglected, dressed in shabby clothing of all varieties, and men in ragged garb, some of them in shirtsleeves and high boots, a mixture of Russian peasant and Gipsy, rusty, strong, and daring. When they begin to sing in chorus, one of two soloists leading the melodies, all their repulsiveness is forgotten. Like a wave their elemental singing rolls over the tense listeners.

When the Russians began to compose great operas there was not only a revelation, but a great hope for a new epoch in music. A Russian composer never has been misunderstood or

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misinterpreted in his own country. Russia has always received her own musicians as other countries received crowned heads, and nowhere else have artists felt such a wonderful atmosphere of warmth.

The Russians are great artists in color, and they know how to create a background for beauty. The interior of the Marinsky Theater is as delicate in its blue and ivory decorations as the boudoir of a beautiful woman, and its effect is so harmonious that it prepares for the wonders of the Russian music. When the curtain rises for "Boris Godunoff," sung by Russians for Russians, no compromises or changes are tolerated, no modifying of scenes or characters. Chaliapine—*Boris Godunoff*—walks from the door of the Kremlin, over the red carpet, over streams of blood, to the church door, far from all the others on the stage. Livid, lonesome, frightful, and frightened, he strikes the tragic chords of his wild soul, begs for absolution, cries in repentance, cringes before the saints, and despises the priests, who stretch out their mysterious claws to drag him into their mystical depths, calling to their aid all the bells, the terrible Great Bell

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sounding like the last judgment. *Boris Godunoff*, sobbing, sinks on his knees. The curtain falls, the ringing of the bells dies away, the music stops, and there is deep, anxious silence. The theater remains dark for one moment, the air is vibrant with the emotion of men and women. Light flames again and the conversation of soft, musical voices is subdued. Russians cannot suddenly change their feelings. Touched deeply, shaken, recalling sufferings, the luxury around them seems only play life. The orchestra interpreted the real life in the truths, the cruelties, and the repentance of the singer, who desires to be good, but cannot live without power. Music and what is in this music Chaliapine has fathomed. Russia has been revealed in both words and music.

On the same square with the imperial opera was the *Drame Musicale*, the democratic opera, the opera for the young, for aspiring artists. In the simple, cold amphitheater, which was not an ideal temple of art, the public was rather more ready to criticize than to enjoy. It did criticize and it did enjoy. An entirely new tradition, a young, fighting spirit permeated the interpreta-

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tions. Here was the home of a very realistic opera. Meanings were not conveyed subtly, but crudely, strongly. There was a vibration like a young storm-wind; intelligence triumphed over artificiality. "Carmen" was staged as never before, realistically, sincerely. This *Carmen* was one of the many who lure men to the under-world, to the tragic end. All on the stage were *Carmens*; *Carmen* was the expression of all.

The old star system was entirely eliminated. It was the triumph of the ensemble. All false opera settings had disappeared, and it seemed natural that these people should sing their joys and sorrows, that their voices sometimes should become hoarse and rough from passion. All of them were young. It was the application of the same artistic idea that Stanislawsky embodied in his Moscow Art Theater. It was the same daring youthfulness with which Serge Diaghileff started his marvelous combination of ballet and decorative art.

In Russia dancing and dancers have never been the frivolous *hors d'œuvres* of the operas; they have given another expression to amours and tragedies, gaiety and romance. Dancing

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was a form of culture, a flower which had to be planted in its own earth. The dancers of the Russian fantasias were trained spiritually as well as bodily in the school which an imperial generosity started and maintained. It was a high school, and the young men and women who were sent to the rows of the imperial ballets were young ladies and young gentlemen of education.

It was not only the splendor of the settings and costumes, it was the spiritualized art, that amazed the world, that taught what high and sacred meaning could be attached to the ballet. The Russian invented character dances, substituting gestures for words that would have been suppressed; but the people who understood unspoken words passionately loved the ballet, asking more and more of the dancers. Dancing was never a mechanical art to them, but was significant of something subtle and exalted. Nowhere were the *Pierrots* and *Pierrettes* more vivacious or the *Petroushkas* more tragic.

Diaghileff's extraordinary Ballet Russe had, whether one would admit it or not, a great influence on the artistic progress of the epoch. Who would deny the importance of the art of

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decoration embracing the work of such painters as Ruskin, Bilibine, Repine, Bakst and Alexander Benoit? Of the marvelous *mise-en-scene* of "Coq d'Or" by Rymsky Korsakoff, with Larionow and Gontschanowa? Who would deny the audacious victories of the modern musicians, Moussorgsky, Rymsky Korsakoff, Balaghireff, Borodine, and the amazing Igor Stravinsky, whose first representation of the "Sacre du Printemps" in Paris marked a date in the history of music? Who would deny the sacred fire brought to the people by the dancers, Nijinsky, Bolm, the Fokines, the Karsavinas, and Pavlowa?

It was the intelligent classes which took part in the rich development of modern art in Russia rather than the blasé great boyars. One of the great merchants of Russia, a Moscow Cræsus, Nicholas Riabouschinsky, undertook the publication of a literary and art review such as only a Russian would understand how to produce. Never was there more sumptuous printing. Unique in form, it was filled with splendid illustrations, worked out in minute detail, every engraving protected by tissue paper specially filigreed for the subject it covered. To direct the

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French part of the review, Alexander Mercereau came from Paris. To encourage young Russian painters, Riabouschinsky arranged the most marvelous exhibitions. To choose the pictures he himself went to Paris. Once in the studio of the famous young artist, Henry Doucet, since killed at the front, he selected a picture for the exhibition in Russia. When the young artist explained that he could not give that picture because it was nearly sold to another person, Riabouschinsky, without saying a word, paid twice the price asked for it, so that he might not lose it from his collection.

The Russian is more generous to the artist than to the art dealer. He must know the artist; he goes to the studios to find the best, even though the fame of the artist has not yet come. He understands art; he feels it, and is never a collector from any snobbish ambition. The canvases representing the newest movements, the most progressive painters,—Cézanne, Van Gogh, Seruzier, Odilon, Redon, Metzinger, Gleizes, Picabia and others were taken to the young artists of Russia, so that they could see how far the French artists were going in their intentions. Riabouschinsky,

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instead of being supported in his great artistic ambitions by the imperial Government, had to fight for his ideas. The censor watched at the frontier, and in the name of the state religion held up the pictures of Girieud, the iconoclast, because he thought they might have an influence on the liberal spirit.

Riabouschinsky really gave the *élan*. Many others followed, and the new art entered all the larger cities of Russia, thanks to the enterprising generosity of men who belonged neither to the great nobility nor to the officials, but to the bourgeoisie, which in Russia is so different from the bourgeoisie of other countries.

The Tetriakoff, Poliakoff, and Morosoff collections give vivid testimony of where the greatest interest in art and the greatest development of younger artists is to be expected. The feeling for art is so deep in the Russian that there is no difference between the noble and the rich merchant and the simple man of the people. The originality in Russian art and literature never was influenced, and even if the Russians have studied in the schools of France or Italy, they go home to write their own books and paint

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their own pictures. They never compose a song that is not their own; they are too strongly individual. They cannot imitate, they are all too creative.

So many eternal beauties grow out of old Russia's old distresses, so many flowers of art and poetry and music sprang forth from the suffering of the people, that the heart is filled with anxiety and curiosity to know what new wonders will be discovered when the jubilant hymn has been sung in young Russia, and whether the songs and the pictures created from the realized ideals of liberty will replace the art which has been for centuries the splendor of the Russian soul.

CHAPTER X

THE PEASANTS—BUREAUCRACY—LITTLE NOBILITY

THE Russian peasants always belonged to the nobles; after their liberation they became servants instead of serfs. They suffered and yet they did not suffer, for as long as the Russian can hold some one responsible for his fate, he is patient and resigned. If he is in misery, he holds his oppressors responsible; and if he is drunk, it is due to his misery.

Dependent on kindness and love, the Russian peasant never revolted from punishment, and he would die for a kind *barin*; but he would never endure indignities from a superintendent, who was no better than he himself, who committed the same crimes, and who had base blood in his veins. It made no difference to the peasant whether the superintendent was in power or not. The peasant never recognized him, and obeyed him with teeth set, only waiting for the opportune moment to attack him.

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The Russian peasant was not envious of the nobleman's riches or of his idle life. He saw no more happiness among the nobles than he himself could have; he would not know what to do with all the things with which the master surrounded himself. He has his sheep fur, and his *barin* had his sables; both kept warm. The *barina* put around her head the same kind of woolen scarf that the peasant's wife wore when the wind whistled over the steppes. The *barina* could lie all day on her couch and read books and nibble candies, but this seemed more difficult than to scrub floors and to brush velevet chairs, because she, first of all, had to study how to read, and the servant knew that the *barina*, when a little girl, often had shed tears when her tutors made her sit quiet for hours to get the letters into her head. No, there was not such a difference. The *barin* also drank, sometimes, and the *barina* cried the same as the peasant's wife cried when he, drunk, beat her. It was just the same, only that the *barina* wanted money, and the *barin* sighed, and had to get it from somewhere, and in his sorrow he often came to the peasant, explaining and apologizing for increasing the rent of the farm.

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Poor *barin*! He looked grieved, and the peasant yielded; the peasant knew that if he did not yield voluntarily, he would be forced to pay more, and he preferred the condescension of the noble, who came personally to ask a favor from him.

As long as the nobles stayed on their land everything was all right. The grandparents had lived on the land, and the peasants' grandparents had been the serfs of the old, old *barins*. There was a tie. Oppression seldom came from the landowners; it came from another power, which represented the nobles, and it was against this that the peasant revolted. As a class the Russian peasants never felt humiliated. They were servile and humble, but that was their good right. They did what they had seen their parents do, and it would be a shame if what had been good enough for one's parents was too low for one's self.

The peasant loved the land even if it was not his own. He cultivated the ground, and was proud and happy when the wheat stood high in the gold of the summer sun and the animals were healthy, and the pigs were nowhere so fat as in his pens, even if the stable belonged to his *barin*.

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Some day he would have his own little piece of ground; but that might not be such an untroubled happiness, because then, if the storm ruined his wheat, the damage occurred to him alone, and no one else was unhappy. Even his pig would not be so well off in the little pen he could provide for it, and would be much better with all the others.

No, to have property was not the peasant's dream. The sky was not divided into thousands and thousands of pieces, and so it should not be with the land. It should be cultivated by many for many. Over the sky rules God, and over many thousands of acres ruled the noble; as long the *barin* was kind and benevolent, the Russian peasant wanted nothing changed. He had his work, and when Sunday came it was a real Sunday, for there was nothing to worry about; he and his family were content. It was his fault and not his *barin's* when he went to the inn with his weekly wages to drink, to make useless speeches about slavery—to drink until his last *copeck* was thrown away; and it was his fault when his family was poor and had nothing to eat and his children became miserable. It was

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his fault when he began the next week without joy, grumbling and quarrelsome, lazy and disobedient, so that the *barin* had to whip him to bring him back to his senses. The *barin* was sorry, but he had to use the knout. It was not the master's fault; it was his. God also punishes his children, and the noble, who understood the soul of the peasant, did not despise him when he whipped him. He spoke kind words, gave him a ruble, and sent him home. So he was often cured for several weeks, and he was happy again, and his wife was happy, and his children had bread.

Sometimes it happened that one of the peasant's children seemed unlike his brothers and sisters, with different features, different ideas, always discontented and envious of things that would not make a peasant happy. Then the *barin* was kind enough to speak with his rebellious child, and to take him from the estate to make him work somewhere else; or he might even give money to buy books the child wanted and to send him to school, and one day the boy himself wrote books, or put flowers, animals, houses, and even the faces of his father and mother on pieces of

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linen, which, as his mother sighed, would make beautiful aprons. Then people made a fuss over the boy and praised his art, as they called it, because his parents were only peasants. That was what a peasant never could endure in all his humility. Only a peasant! But that was much. There were others who were less; for instance, the police. The police had a certain power to nag and to make a man's life unbearable; but this was not a privilege; it was a misfortune. Such a poor creature was a policeman, who measured his power by copecks, and was friendly or hostile according to how much had been paid for his good graces! Was he not more pitiable than the peasant?

And there were persons who came and wanted to know why the peasants were not more independent. These people would organize the peasants and would persuade them to leave the soil, to work in factories behind machines more dangerous than animals; because one can never know the moment when a machine might turn around to avenge itself on the human creatures who are its slaves.

The Russian peasants will have nothing to do

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with these monsters. One day the *barin* brought one to the fields, where he thought the work behind the plow with horses and oxen not quick enough. There it stood menacing the men around it, who looked like pygmies, and who put all the little screws into its body to make it work. And woe to the man who forgot one little part or put in the wrong screw! The monster treated a man, a sacred human being of flesh and blood, as a piece of straw, crushed him, and spit him out a bloody bundle.

No, the Russian peasant did not like machines; he would not have the responsibility they brought to him. He did not like the mechanical world. There was so much more beauty in the little flowers, the blossoming trees, and the snow crystals. No, he preferred to fight with wolves and bears that announced the danger; and even if he was killed, he had fought them first. He was helpless with the machines, and he would not change his work under the sky, in the open air, for work underground or in the factories, where the ears were deafened by the terrible noise, where danger lurked in every corner, and where a man could command or dismiss, a man without

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any mercy, a man who had become a machine himself. The Russian reasoned that, if there existed men who invented such artificial thunders and lightnings, there would be found others who would work them, men with mechanical minds, men who had never worked in the fields, men who never felt masters, because they never felt oppressed.

It was a misfortune for the peasants to have a city in the neighborhood, where they were lured to take positions as *dworniks* in shops or inns particularly attractive to them on account of the eternal tips. Even the boys were taken to the capital as little servants, in their national costume, their only pay being the silken shirts and nice boots and sufficient food. Some of them remained illiterate, and after a while returned to the country to be peasants again, a fate most undesirable, because they took back with them all sorts of pretensions that spoiled the simplicity of the people. Sometimes they learned to read and to write, and then they were most ambitious to find masters with whom they could travel. These made good servants, obedient, intelligent, and shrewd, and when they came to see their

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peasant parents, they were shown to the others as wonders, since they had learned a little German or French and had picked up gentle manners. But, as an old peasant said, they had lost their religion and they did not believe in the rights of the nobles.

It did occur that the landowner was far away from the people who toiled in his fields and did not know when the long winter brought no work and no money with which to buy what was necessary; when the animals died of diseases, and no one could find out the cause, when the wife fell ill, and the children, too. Oh, there were trying times; but this was fate, and perhaps, if the *barin* would come to see to things, all would be much better. But in the noble's castle lived a stranger who had no heart, who was paid to supervise the peasants; and when the harvest was poor, he took from the peasant's money, so that the *barin's* income would not be cut down and he would not lose his place, which gave his wife the privilege of driving in the noble's coaches and sitting on the *barina's* splendid furniture. So the peasant suffered because the *barin* was not there to look after his children. For this the

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peasant revolted now and then, but it did not help much; it made life cruel. The police hounded the peasant, who loved to live in the open air, to tramp; he was jailed and forgotten, and his family could die of starvation.

This was all very sad, but it was because Russia was so vast, and the nobles had too many estates; the *barin* could not have his eyes everywhere, and it served the peasant right that he had not good sense, as his wife said to him worriedly, when he first began to drink and to curse and to take his ax to kill the superintendent. It was not his fault that he met other men who had the same misery at home and who had to drink to forget and to gain courage to kick the cold-blooded, fat superintendent and his wife, the stupid, puffed-up woman, who had ear-rings, and short-nosed, ridiculous children that no longer spoke Russian. Russian was not fine enough! But these sinful thoughts and actions were very unfortunate, and brought him to the abyss. God probably had tried him, and he had failed. He wished only that his children, if they ever grew up under these sad conditions, would be wiser

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than he, and that they would not fall victims to the vodka devil.

When the prison was too crowded, the peasant was sometimes given his freedom; sometimes he was dragged to a wagon, which wheeled slowly many miles to a place far away from his province where nobody knew him, where they thought him a common criminal, where nobody understood that he was only a misled peasant who never would revolt again if he could go back to his family. And his family waited at home, and after a while he was believed dead, and the poor wife went to work to feed the children. The children, bloodless and thin, began to work too early or died of smallpox, which always attacks the feeble more often than the well fed.

Oh, no, there had not been always joy and happiness for the peasant, and the rich nobles were to blame; the nobles did not know the holy responsibility that the ownership of property implies. It was not the bad education or the lack of education of the people that had kept Russia back from civilization, it was the indifference of the nobles; it was also the vastness of the country.



FATHER GAPON WITH THE WORKMEN AND WOMEN
Before marching with their petition to the Winter Palace, where the soldiers fired on them (Bloody Sunday). Count Witte is among them

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Often a Russian aristocrat, living in Moscow, would say, if a remote place was mentioned:

“I believe I must own some land out there. I found a deed among my father’s papers when he died.”

It happened that a young heir was the first man in three generations who wanted to see an old family estate somewhere in Simbirsk, where the communications were difficult, and the parents never took the time or suffered the inconveniences, to make the long trip from the capital. It came into his head, when the “intendant” had refused to advance money on a tract of ten thousand acres of unmortgaged land, to travel incognito to the estates and to see what the “intendant” was like. The “intendant” was thought trustworthy, as the young man’s ancestor had liberated the serf grandfather and rewarded him for faithful service with the post of overseer. Sometimes a peasant, sent by all the others, would make the long journey to present a petition to the *barin*. The young *barin* remembered the white-bearded old man who sat in the kitchen to have, first of all, his tea, while he blessed the children of his *barin* with tears in his eyes. The

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barin's father had explained to the son that peasants always had tears in their eyes when they wanted something special and that they were never contented; that there were always complaint of the "intendant" about the peasants, and from the peasants about the "intendant," and that the best thing to do was not to pay any attention to this, and to let them fight their own fights. The peasant was dismissed with promises, but in reality the letter that the *barin* wrote to the "intendant" did not help much, and the peasant's life was much harder.

The young heir took the boat, and where the Kama River crossed the Volga he left the boat, and he took a coach with three speedy horses to make the drive of twenty hours. The *pristav* of the little town where the boat stopped equipped him with the power necessary, and even a *gardovoy* sat on the box of the coach.

Nothing could be more peaceful and beautiful than the forgotten vast, high plains surrounded by white birch trees, which are nowhere so strong as in Simbirsk. The roads were bad, and often the coach sank deep in the muddy ground. The inn on the deserted road, where the night had to

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be passed, was the most primitive. Its one state-chamber had three beds in it, in case there might be, in the night, other travelers. Its price was one ruble without linen, as it was taken for granted that the traveler would carry his own sheets and towels. The state-chamber had not been opened for months, and had been left untouched after the last visitor, who had preferred to sleep without bed linen. The innkeeper was very sorry that the noble traveler had not announced his coming the week before. To open the windows the young man used a knife to pry out the papers around the casements and to let in the wonderful aromatic air from the fields and the woods. The innkeeper shook his head disapprovingly, and prophesied to the inexperienced young man a bad cold, which always came from too much fresh air.

In the hall, which was used as the dining-room, sat several peasants and a wandering Jew with his bundle. As it was late, they had stretched their tired limbs on the benches. A glance at the poor *Ahasver* showed how exhausted he was, but the innkeeper rebuked them roughly for disrespect to the nobleman. The Jew instantly see-

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ing his opportunity, awoke and displayed his goods, showing that he had everything that could be needed for the night under the roof of the inn. Smiling and happy, he retired to a remote corner, although the young man would have been much more pleased if the Jew had gone out for a walk while tea, a delicious cabbage soup, some fresh *piroggi*, and a piece of delicate ham were served for his supper. The night in the inn was a torture; but it was June, the night was short, and with the dawn the young man left the room where the blood-thirsty insects were awake.

The old peasant who drove the coach pointed out to the young man the sloping milestone that marked the boundary of his estate.

The young *barin* was silent and even a little moved as he drove for hours and hours over land which was his. He looked around. The seed was planted, the ground tilled. The little colonies of peasants, which were passed here and there, appeared no better and no worse than the other poor, rudimentary villages in the vast solitudes of the Russian landscapes. Dirty children, amazed, glanced at the coach. Disturbed dogs infuriated, ran with the horses, only to speed

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back to the poor houses where they had left old bones. The slow and groaning coach moved in a serpentine route over the uneven road to the top of the plain, which seemed to lie in a veil of delicate sunbeams. The earth breathed forth a wonderful fertility from its open furrows of dark soil.

In the distance oxen drew a plow, and a young boy, shouting and whipping the animals, walked behind. Like clouds, between sky and earth, innumerable sheep moved over the meadows, nibbling the grass and rubbing one another's wool, for they had not been liberated from their winter dress. Suddenly at the end of an alley of old maples shone yellow and friendly the castle of the estate.

The *gardovoy* turned to say slyly that perhaps the *barin* would better keep his incognito and make the scoundrelly superintendent believe that he was a possible purchaser, for the "intendant" was a rascal who cheated everybody, whose daughters were kept like *barischnas* and even had a French governess, and whose sons were in the regiments in Samara. All this did not belong to an honest "intendant" whose grandparents had

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been serfs. The young man accepted the suggestion of the *gardovoy*. The old peasant on the box smiled; Russians like to play a little comedy. The coach stopped. The place seemed sleepy in the warmth of midday. A kind of Russian butler, barefooted, and with a towel over his shoulder, appeared around the corner of the porch. He looked perplexedly at the coach, at the young man, and at the severe *gardovoy*. Visitors! They had not been announced; or perhaps it was an inspection of the police. First of all he scratched his head and then bowed humbly. The *gardovoy* did the talking. Was Simeon Wassiliewitsch at home? Why, yes, he was at home; he was out looking at the stables.

“Then,” the *gardovoy* replied, “tell Simeon Wassiliewitsch that noble travelers are here to buy the place.”

The Russian butler opened his mouth wide.

“What, is the place to be sold?” he asked.

“*Pascholl!*” said the *gardovoy*, which meant, “Hurry up or I will kick you,” and the butler *pascholled*, to come back after a while in a clean blue-linen shirt, with high boots on his feet, and his hair wetted with water or grease. The young

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man was asked to take a seat until Simeon Wassiliewitsch and his wife Sofia Bogdanowa appeared. It seemed that the house suddenly was awakened into a state of excitement. Doors were opened and shut, windows were opened, and from one of them a rosy-faced, fair-haired girl looked out, to withdraw, embarrassed, on meeting the young man's laughing glances.

When the *gardovoy* returned from the stable, where the horses were unharnessed, he smiled whimsically.

"The place looks pretty good," he said. "Simeon Wassiliewitsch lives here like a moth in a fur-coat."

The "intendant," alarmed, came hurriedly from the courtyard. He was a rusty-looking fellow, with sly eyes and a long mustache, which gave him a martial look. The *gardovoy* explained in a few words what the young man had come for. Simeon bowed a little uneasily, and also scratched his head. No one had informed him that the new heir, the young count, would sell the estate, which had belonged to the family for more than a hundred years.

"That is why," the *gardovoy* nodded, "the

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pristav has ordered that Simeon Wassiliewitsch shall show the estate in minutest detail."

The "intendant," who avoided having much to do with the police, completely changed his policy. He probably thought it wise to be very, very hospitable, and, bowing, he said that it was an honor to show the place where he had been the superintendent; he was proud to show how good and faithful he had been. And how long would his Excellency, as he addressed the young boy, give him the great joy to remain there? Several days, perhaps? Then the guest-rooms would be put in order right away, so as to make it as comfortable as possible for his Excellency under his humble roof. The *gardovoy* smiled at the well-oiled speech of Simeon Wassiliewitsch as he went away.

The house was clean and comfortable, with its vast rooms, large windows, and wide halls. It was partly furnished with good old things, mingled with pieces that showed an incredible provincial taste, which made the young heir smile. He had lost his timidity, and had decided to go to the bottom of affairs. Anyhow, the estate was in good condition,—that was apparent,—

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and the sly Simeon had made a good fortune for himself. An excited race of little butlers, all barefooted at first, and then booted, went on through the halls, and finally a fat housekeeper appeared to find out what the guest needed. The housekeeper looked astonished when the young man asked for water with which to wash himself before luncheon. Water at that time of day! Such a request was a little embarrassing, for all the water-bearers were in the fields, and the water was rather remote from the house. At last they compromised on a tea-cupful of boiling water from the kitchen. Not only was the water remote, but the bath-room turned out to be the little river that flowed at the foot of the garden, shrubbery separating the gentlemen's part from the ladies'; for the housekeeper explained that the ladies, having a French education, were very particular. In old times nobody thought of such a division. She appeared to prefer the old times.

In the dining-room the window-shades were closed on account of the bright sunlight and it looked cozy, with the round table, the sideboard with many bottles and steaming dishes, and with the friendly, singing samovar. First, a bowing

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with fluttering of white dresses and floating hair was visible from the ladies of the household, and the wife of the superintendent, round and stout, felt honored when the young man kissed her fat, white hand, and she responded with the customary light touch of her lips on his temple. At the sideboard the men took their glasses of vodka, while the ladies stood modestly waiting at the round table for the men to start the luncheon, which turned out to be an excellent dinner.

The whole family was somewhat frightened by the news that the estate was to be sold. This seemed quite unbelievable to Sofia Bogdanowa, who considered herself a kind of queen and who never thought that a new owner could dispose of the property. She sighed, and mentioned the innumerable inconveniences,—the distance from social life and the long winters,—but naturally they could not pass the whole winter there; after Christmas they always moved to the little town, where there would be pleasures for her daughters. The daughters, sweet, pretty girls, were shy and silent. They sat without saying a word beside their Swiss governess, who looked up with burning, longing eyes, like a poor cow. They talked

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French, real French, and Sofia Bogdanowa mingled with her Russian many French words to show her noble education. Simeon was proud of his family. He left the conversation to his wife, and was zealous to have his guest try his best wine from Bordeaux.

The place was so charming, so calm, and so remote not only in miles, but in spirit, that even this lady, who thought herself the last cry in fashion, was like a picture of the *precieuse* time of Tolstoy's youth. She read French novels and lived entirely in the world of romance, leaving everything practical to Simeon, and her only dream was to spend part of the time in the capital and part of the time in Carlsbad.

Wonderful horses were in the stables,—horses of fast breed, with little, intelligent heads,—and the young heir passed most of the day on horseback, speeding over the ten thousand acres. In the evenings he walked with the young ladies; he was young with them, and without worries. The estate was in good condition and most profitable; even the misleading figures that Simeon showed gave an idea of how much he must have put into his own pocket.

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And there was a coal-mine somewhere, the *gardovoy* had found out from the servants, who did not like Simeon and wanted to have a real *barin*. It was like having margarin instead of real butter. Yes, Simeon sold the fresh butter, and sent it to the River Kama, whence it was shipped God knew how far, perhaps even to Germany. No one could tell exactly. The peasants had to eat an imitation of butter, which was called margarin. It was really astonishing how far advanced this Simbirsk overseer was in modern inventions.

It was not until the last day of the visit that the dramatic moment came when the young heir turned out to be the count, the owner himself. It was the real last act of a merry comedy. Sofia Bogdanowa shed tears, the little girls looked radiant. The governess had guessed it, and Simeon grew white. The *gardovoy* had to confirm the young man's claim, for Simeon never would have believed it. But everything came to a good end. Simeon agreed to pay double rents, to send verified reports about the estate, and even to drive with the young count to the provincial town, where he could get cash from the bank.

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The "intendant" also promised to have a bath-room in the house when the count would honor the castle with a visit in the hunting-season, and that he would look after the peasants, who now came to make complaints and who had suffered under Simeon's heavy rule.

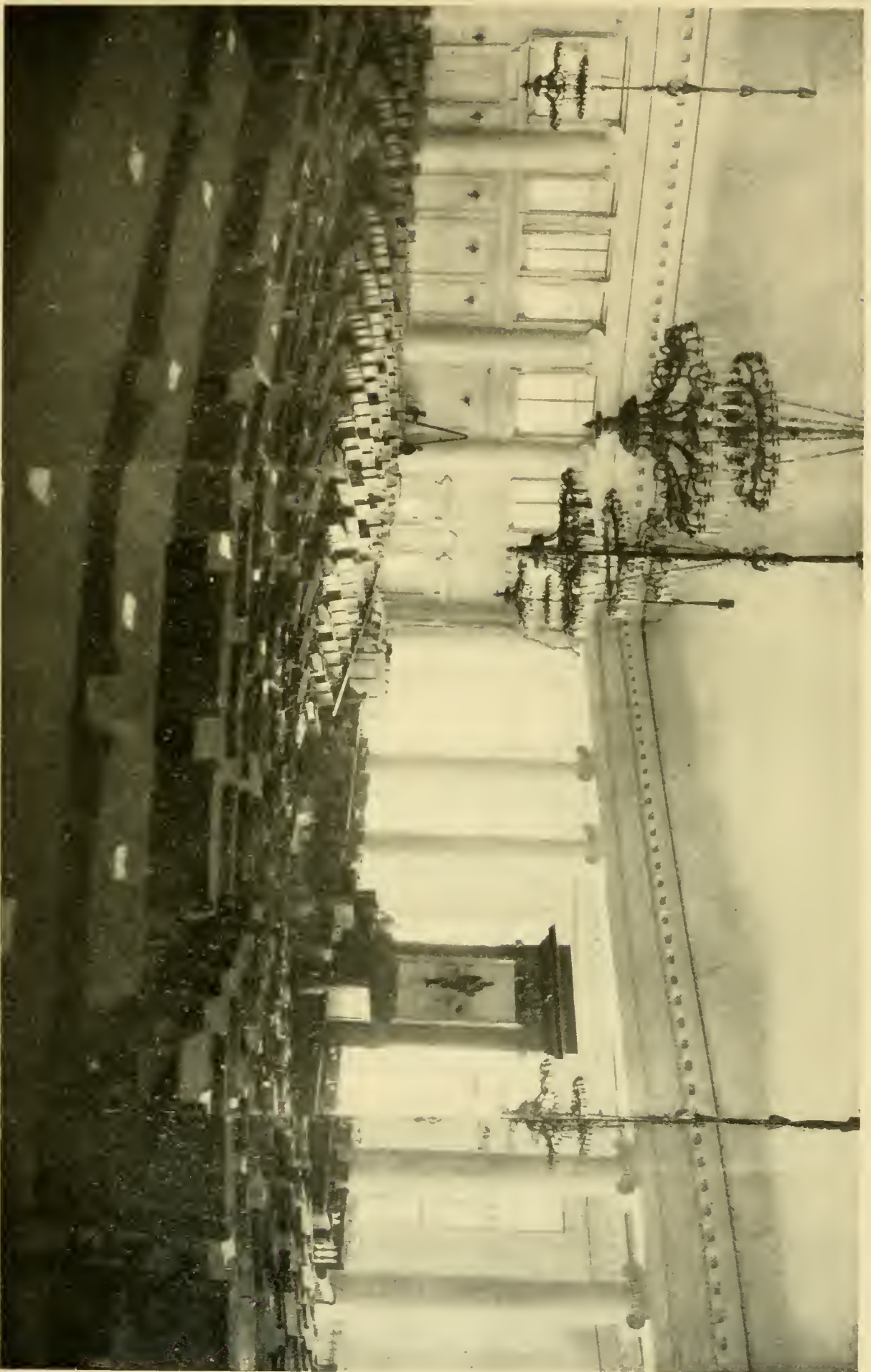
This was one of the lucky cases where the estate was not neglected and ruined, where the peasants were treated badly only when they disobeyed and refused to work. The "intendant," who was regarded as the representative of the count, had his seat in the zemstvos, and so the rights of the individual peasant were disregarded. The zemstvos supervised the estates as a whole, their products, and, as far as possible, the sanitary conditions. They tried to eliminate infectious diseases among the peasants and their live stock. Smallpox always has been prevalent in Russia, and nowhere else are so many scarred faces to be seen.

The zemstvos had departments where lands were registered, with all details concerning them. They have regulated the prices of food-stuffs, established credits, and made possible quicker and easier work. They also took care of the peasants.

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who were occupied only a few weeks in the year, on account of the climate, and who emigrated to other parts of Russia where population is needed and the opportunities are better. The provinces coöperate in having land exploited and the output increased. The zemstvos were the only organizations in old Russia that really worked without graft and bribery. The members had had their own interests too long jeopardized not to know that oppression of the peasant meant their own ruin. They knew all the resources which slumber in Russia's people; the unweakened force of the primitive folk and the wonderful naïveté of imaginative souls that found expression in their legends and their music. Russian nobility and Russian peasants rose from one source, and it is most promising that the head of the zemstvos will help rule new Russia, for that means that the democracy that rules has its roots in the heart of Russia.

An entire class by itself is the little nobility composed of the bureaucracy, the clergy, and the police. In the smaller towns it is this class which has played the first violin. The governor, the head of a province, was the center around which



THE DUMA, WITH THE PICTURE OF THE CZAR
This picture has now been taken down

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the petty ambitions of this class circled socially. The governor himself usually was a removed general of the army or an embarrassing nobleman, with youthful sins on his record, which made his high family want him out of the way, or an aspiring politician rising to more exalted place. In any case, he was a man to be respected. To be received by the governor and to be invited to his fêtes was the aim of every woman and the ambition of all officials. Generally the governor had a good time. He had only to hold his hand open to obtain presents big and small from all sorts of petitioners, who never would have been heard by the minister in the capital if they had not been recommended by the provincial governor, the intermediary through whose influence everything had to go. Between the petitioner and the governor flourished the *tschninorwniks*, whose good graces were absolutely necessary to gain the governor's ear. Sometimes it was the wife of the governor who, aware of her importance, protected, favored, and rejected persons or demands. In the smaller towns the same intrigues were woven for little matters as in Moscow or Petrograd for large affairs.

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The same system of bribes and graft was employed everywhere. It was the great achievement of the governor never to be caught. He always had his "sale monsieur," who listened to the petitioner. Those who paid best were heard first.

If a regiment was stationed in one of the little towns, life and pleasure were amazing. There were two clubs, the aristocratic and the club of the lettered. The club of nobility, with the governor as president, was the goal of social ambition. Its bylaws required the strictest behavior on the part of its members: a fine of one ruble for spitting against the wall; two rubles for using the curtains instead of a handkerchief; five rubles for calling the waiters swine or attempting to shoot them when drunk; exclusion from the official dining-room for a week for breaking chairs or china when drunk. The members were always fined, which assured the club a good income. Ladies were not excluded; on the contrary, it was fashionable for them to dine at the club.

The literary club was simpler. It was an assembly of journalists, physicians, lawyers, prosperous merchants, and the discontented. It

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had something of a political character, and women were admitted on certain days. This club was suspected. It was a dangerous milieu, where anarchistic and socialist meetings were sometimes discovered, and then closed by the chief of police, who was a member of the club of nobility. In many cases the chief of police was a jovial man who, behind closed doors, yielded to compromises when the champagne was not too bad and when members offered him sufficient money. So it happened that on one stormy political night such a club was closed and reopened twice.

Gossip blossomed in the provincial towns, but to a certain degree gallant adventures were tolerated, especially if the sinners belonged to the exclusive class and did not mix with unimportant personalities. There were rarely any apartment-houses in the small towns, for there was space enough for a family to have a house to itself. The usual frame house was spacious and characterless. The hall, overheated and never aired, was a mixture of fur coats belonging to both sexes, rubbers of all sizes, umbrellas, fur caps, and woolen scarfs. There was a drawing-room

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of cold splendor, which was opened only for great occasions. A white marble table stood in the middle of the room, like an island, and on it were the family albums in velvet, cheap German work. Red and blue velvet corner sofas, uncomfortable arm-chairs, and artificial flowers in alabaster vases completed its magnificence. In one corner was a hanging icon, with its ever-burning light, and in another were assembled glasses containing preserved cucumbers and fruits. The doors of the various rooms were never closed, and sometimes a visitor enjoyed the unexpected view of the lady of the house in the act of dressing. But the lady was never timid or hypocritical. On the contrary, she was proud of her complicated French toilet articles and French cosmetics. As she was likely to be rather indolent, she often abandoned the marvels of make-up, sometimes for days, preferring to lie on her couch with her books and her cigarettes, not discommoding herself and receiving visitors in her negligée. Lying in a dim light, her untidiness was partly concealed, and the air was heavy with French perfumes.

The women of the middle class in Russia are

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stout like Orientals, and have the same qualities. Their daughters are confided to governesses; and the young girls, sometimes of the finest material, have the greatest possibilities. But as the parents are blind and too much occupied with their own lives, the noblest ideals are often abused. Many of the girls, if not married to husbands whom in most cases they hated, went to the universities or to the capital. To get away from the narrow laziness of their families, they joined in political agitations. In the Russian literature is too much of good and bad inspiration, which easily allures both boys and girls to a misunderstanding of freedom or liberty of life. But there is a wonderful stock of human force, intelligence, and aspiration in the provinces, which young Russia will use rightly, and the corrupt and ridiculous class of little nobility will vanish.

To travel was always the highest desire of the idle provincial ladies. To have a country home, owned or rented, at one of the fashionable Caucasian water resorts or at the seashore was absolutely necessary to them. It is not like traveling; it is like an emigration when such a family moves to its summer residence. A Rus-

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sian train conductor is the most indulgent creature in the world. He waits at the car-door until the *tschinownik*, with his wife, children, and servants is settled in a compartment with his hand luggage. This hand luggage consists, many times, not only of a certain number of cushions and bed-covers, in addition to bags, boxes, and baskets, but of sewing-machines, cradles, perambulators, musical instruments belonging to the daughters, and finally the pets of the children, birds, dogs, rabbits and even white mice. A family often travels for twenty-four hours and longer to reach the summer place. After a few hours the crowded compartments have become like a little town where all the people know one another. The travelers laugh, chat, and sleep; they smoke and drink.

Russia has wonderful health resorts in the Crimea and the Caucasus, which are favored by climate and situation. They are equal to those of the Italian and French Rivas, and rich in mineral waters helpful for all sorts of invalids. Along the shores near Yalta in the Crimea is a girdle of fascinating gardens and palaces of the rich Russians and the aristocracy. After the

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former czar's family showed a preference for the Russian Riviera, hotels were opened and prices became as high as in other fashionable places.

The Russian watering-places never were prepared to furnish the accommodations to be found in resorts not so remote from the center of the European world. Side by side with the greatest luxury the most disagreeable conditions prevailed, and European and American visitors could not understand the existence of certain institutions that shocked even the good-natured Russians.

At Kislavodsk everything is beautifully cared for, and nothing is different from places like Carlsbad or Vichy. Elegantly gowned women promenade to the ever-playing music, drink the mineral waters, and stop at the different arcades to purchase typical souvenirs or to drink tea or eat ice-creams in cafés or confectionery shops.

Yet only a few yards from the bath-house, the milieu of the fashionable world, the waters dripping from big pipes collect in a round hole, which the poor folk of Kislavodsk have enlarged to a good-sized pool, and here, quite unembarrassed, partly undressed men and women, old and young,

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sit close together taking their baths, and deriving benefit from the healing springs.

Tourists who go for the first time to Kis-lavodsk and pass this peculiar spectacle are startled, but finally they accept the situation. It is Russian.

CHAPTER XI

TRAVELING IN RUSSIA OF YESTERDAY, WHICH WILL BE ALSO THE RUSSIA OF TO-MORROW

IN former Russia the loss of a passport was a calamity. All possible excuses were rejected; the traveler without the paper with official seal was absolutely barred if there was not some authority to testify to his harmlessness and to his innocent intention of traveling in Russia only for pleasure. To add the words "for instruction" was dangerous, because former Russia did not want anybody to make a tour of discovery; and if such a tour was announced officially, the curious man naturally never learned what he wanted to know. The Russian official concealed everything that could be valuable to the stranger.

For the outsider the greatest barrier is naturally the language, and if Russians are obstinate,—and that is what they usually are toward a stranger,—they will not speak a word except in Russian. Therefore the traveler must collect words from his pocket dictionary, and as he pro-

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nounces them absurdly, the Russians shake their heads as they dismiss him sneeringly.

If the passport was lost, and there was no one of authority on the train to recognize the unfortunate person, in mild cases, he was detained for twenty-four hours in the frontier town, with mixed people, mixed languages, and mixed habits. It was only by good luck that he could leave the restaurant, where waiters told sinister stories of travelers without passports who were recognized as terrible criminals, or mistaken for them, and who were not only kept out of Russia, but were put in jail and sometimes even chained. Such a delay was hair-raising, and it is strange that tips did not help at all. The chief trick of officials was to be over-exacting concerning passports, as this strictness could hide many laxities in other directions, and the more the head of the gendarmie at the frontier discovered irregularities, the more efficient he was supposed to be. For each irregularity he received a new decoration, and after he had collected many little orders he was ripe for the Alexander Nevsky, formerly much coveted, which shone day and night on the happy bearer's breast.

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When finally a high official would speak in favor of the poor victim of the Russian frontier, the unfortunate traveler was released, only to be convoyed to his destination by a gendarme. The next difficulty arose at the entrance to his hotel. It was a very European hotel which the stranger entered despite the porter in purple blouse and with peacock feather in his cap. Without delay the passport was demanded, and before the key was handed to the little bellboy in national costume the traveler had to deliver his papers. Before this trap all other impressions vanished. The traveler, with cold perspiration on his forehead, told his story to the European-speaking manager, who tried to make him understand that the hotel could not protect guests without passports.

The manager advised that the ambassador from the traveler's country be called up; but if the ambassador was out, and his staff dining or supping somewhere, the traveler would be asked for his credentials. Among the letters of the traveler might be one addressed to a general in the suite of the czar. This general could do everything; he could achieve miracles. His visit-

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ing card could make it possible to travel through Russia without a passport. But the general was on duty at Tsarskoje Sselo, and only after a telephone message brought answer by an aide-de-camp that the general expected the gentleman from abroad, and would be glad to see him the next morning, the hotel manager was satisfied, and the little bell-boy led the weary traveler to his very European suite.

The rooms in the luxurious hotels of the Capital are not different from those of the hotel palaces in other parts of the world. The bath-rooms contain the same comforts, and it is only at the water that travelers will look with a certain apprehension. The water in Petrograd is the color of chocolate. Residents assure strangers that it is the high percentage of iron that makes it of so dark a tint; but those who know will confess that Petrograd is still lacking in sanitary regulations. The water question is not solved. It is very disagreeable to enter the water, still muddy after being filtered by the hotel filters, which work day and night. A servant provides a bottle of boiled water, according to a strict rule of the hotels, to prevent the everlasting danger of typhoid fever

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or cholera. But even with this boiled water the cautious attendant brings a bottle of excellent mineral water, with which he advises the guest to clean his teeth, because one can never know in Russia what devil can sit in the drinking-water! No one could be more attentive than the Russian servant. Smiling and indefatigable, he guesses the wishes of foreigners. The door of an apartment is always protected, a servant waiting in the ante-chamber for orders, and eager to please the stranger confided to his care. Attention bought with money is less obvious than elsewhere, and tips are comparatively modest. The servant smiles; he tries to draw attention to things not known to the traveler, to what passes in the streets. He tells who lives in neighboring rooms, and even relates interesting scandals of well-known personages or of distinguished society ladies. He is never impertinent, but always humble. Such a servant is a keen observer, and never loses his sense of social distances.

The Russian servant is absolutely different from all others. He is servant heart and soul; he would be nothing but that, and wants to give satisfaction. He waits tenderly on his master

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with fatherly affection, and even when taking part in the most intimate conversation he never presumes; that is something beyond his understanding. He is not a Socialist. He is always contented until he is associated with others of his own class who are not Russians. The discontented Russian is very dangerous. The slightest sign of freedom is usually misunderstood by a servant, and there is no difference between disobedience and mutiny, between word and deed, between offense and murder. The expression on the face of the Russian servant is extremely patient and good-natured. He smiles, and if the master is disturbed, he tries to smooth him. He begs, he sheds tears, he wants to be beaten; and if the master is Russian enough to slap his servant he is adored, because after such a storm comes the soft reaction of repentance and forgiveness.

The climate of Petrograd is trying. Most of the year it is exceedingly damp. When cold, the north winds are unbearable; and when hot, the sun is nowhere more merciless than in the long, unshaded avenues of Petrograd. To walk over the Kasan or the Isaacs Plaza on a warm day is

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torture. So really nobody walks, and when the stranger leaves the hotel door the little *istvotschiks* overrun one another to be at his disposal. They shed tears to get a few copecks, but they finally yield their demands good-naturedly when they see that their arguments are vain. Women travelers are warned never to hire one of the good-looking drivers who wait in front of the hotels. In dark-green, wadded coats they sit solemnly on the boxes of their comfortable-looking little coaches; the harness of their long-tailed horses is ornamented with silver, with little silver bells on their collars. It is not considered respectable for a woman to drive in these carriages, which are used by the demi-world.

When the traveler left to the *istvoschik* what to see first in former St. Petersburg, he was driven over the Neva Bridge to the Narodni Dom, the House of the People, which Czar Nicholas II gave to his beloved people and dedicated to them. It was indeed an imperial gift, and it would be ungrateful if the Russian people ever should forget the memory of this czar. The czar trusted to the progressive taste of Russians when the house was consecrated to the best perform-

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ances that the aristocracy saw in the Imperial Opera and the Michelsk Theater. The house has under its roof two wonderful theaters, one vast and airy, with every seat at one price. The operas and ballets were given with the artists from the Marien Theater, and the settings were of the same colorful beauty as in the Imperial Opera. The second theater is an amphitheater in light oak, and here were offered the best Russian plays, with excellent casts. The vast building has large restaurants where the people can have everything to eat at a very low price and where alcoholic drinks are not served. The restaurants are open during the day for students and laborers. Surrounded by a garden where on warm evenings all kinds of refreshments can be had, the *Narodi Dom* gives the impression of an establishment as elegant as any place of amusement in Paris or London. The theaters are always crowded, and the people follow the performances with great intensity. Opera-tickets sell for twenty-five cents, and those for the plays for ten.

Then the coachman drives to the Alexander Nevsky Monastery, where the great saint of St.

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Petersburg has his cathedral. On the way he points out the imperial buildings, the monument of Peter the Great, of Catharine, the Little Mother. He knows exactly what is worth while looking at, and he makes himself understood by intelligent signs; one can see that he is sorry that the foreigner can not speak his language. But when understood, he can tell all sorts of stories about the czar, the generals, the ministers, and about the saints. He is wide-awake, and his remarks are very clever; sometimes he can even read. He never fails to give his name and to recommend himself for the next time.

But the serious question of the passport has to be settled before the foreigner can breathe freely. The general in the suite of the czar called promptly in all his military pomp. With a stoicism to be admired, he wore his warm uniform, his official uniform, with all his decorations for the first call, and he looked really a war hero. When the servants, with many bows, announced him, they looked on the stranger with a kindness mixed with a certain respect, and when the foreigner was ready to receive the caller, the servants, still bowing, ushered him to the door,

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where they waited for him with crossed arms. The double doors flew open, when the general stood impressive and formal. But his face changed quickly to a most charming amiability. Immediately, without asking, the servant dismantled the general of his heavy coat, for it was ninety degrees in the shade, but the sword still hung at his side, for, as he said, a Russian soldier never parts with his sword. This sounds very martial, but after the usual glass of tea and very cold cognac, silently served by the *tschelavik*, the general leaned back in the deep fauteuil, talking interestingly and amusingly in his wonderful French or English, and then mechanically unbuckled the leather belt to which the sword was attached, the ever-present servant taking it and placing it tenderly on the couch. Then the general being quite comfortable, the hours ran like sand under the animated conversation, and, as understood the *tschelavik* brought the *zakoustka*, the cigarettes and then served the luncheon, knowing exactly what a general would like and what a foreigner should be taught. The Russian cuisine is excellent. They have those wonderful fish of the Volga, immense in size and with

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only the one strong bone in the center. It is the greatest delicacy, this cold stör (assitrina) the famous producer of caviare. Everything was seasonable—the cold bortsch, the sour cream, the iced caviar and the champagne cup. To his amazement the foreigner found afterward, when the weekly bill was presented, that he had been the guest of his guest who had ordered the luncheon before presenting himself. Then last of all a mighty round loaf of bread was brought. Baked in its center was a silver salt-cup, ornamented with unique tula work, with salt in it, which means *soyez le bienvenu*.

When the luncheon was ended and conversation became a little less lively the general suddenly smiled and said, "Let us have a little nap; it is so refreshing on such a hot day." The *tschelavik* was only waiting for the hint. Instantly, the general's high boots were off and lying down peacefully beside his sword on the couch he took a long doze. All was so natural because among persons belonging to the same social world formality absolutely ceases and that makes life in Russia from the beginning wonderfully human and joyful.

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Still there was the question of the passport. When awake the general was ready to attend to the stupid invention of Russian laws, which are sometimes absolutely necessary, as he added. The general's own coach waited and the coachman, having turned up the tails of his quilted coat to cool his body, slept patiently on the box. The general's whistle woke him up and dropping his coattails, stretching the lines tightly, he made a startling vault before the hotel door. Presently, the two black horses sped over the wooden pavement like winged animals, and the general explained that, despite the automobile, the Russian horse always would be preferred in the city. Stopping before police headquarters, there was a sudden, excited movement among the sleepy, watching policemen. The expression on the faces of the policemen, each one thinking himself mighty, showed signs of fear. The general asked for the official who handled passports. Jumping up the stairs and opening doors, the messenger shouted the name of the general so often that when the proper official was finally reached, the man was prepared for his visitor; but not knowing for what crime he might be

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arrested, he stood behind his desk humbly rubbing his hands.

The general explained the case briefly in commanding tones, and the official was so confused that he did not dare to chase away the flies which adorned his beard. As he stammered his answers, the flies entered his open mouth, and he swallowed them resignedly. Whereupon the general, turning to the traveler, remarked: "Look at this animal! He is so afraid that he even swallows flies!"

When it is summer in Russia, the families of high officials live in their country places far away from the capital, and the men pass the week-ends at near-by sea shores on the Baltic, where life is gay and devoid of complexities. There are hotels, but people belonging to society do not live in them; instead, they rent *datches*, little summer houses, very simple, but comfortable, and always ready for the *barins*. For this reason, when the general drove his guest to his house, they found it deserted, dismantled, wrapped in chintzes and papers, only the library and a bedroom being left habitable for the general, who explained that all were in the country,

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a night's trip distant. He was not very busy, but every week he had two trying days,—he sighed,—as then he had to be on duty with his Majesty. Sometimes it was pleasant when the czar was in a good humor; but when he had one of his fits of temper it was unbearable, and heavy drinking was the only rescue. The czar never knew what he wanted, and as every two days there was a different officer on duty, every two days he changed his ideas about governing Russia. One day Russia seemed to him the easiest state to rule, and the next he thought that Russia should be chained as a whole, from the highest to the lowest, the people being lower than beasts. And when the czar had one of his deaf-minded days nothing could make him change an opinion. Then brandy helped him to total forgetfulness of decisions that he was about to make. The general shook his head; it would end sadly some day, and then those who were devoted to the czar could not help him much.

With his powerful influence, the general made it possible to have the Hermitage opened, which was closed on account of repairs and for the hanging of new pictures. Nothing could have



THE TAURIDA PALACE, WHERE THE DUMA CONVENES

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been more interesting to a stranger than to see Russian artists at work, because all the officials who superintended the Hermitage were artists, and the arrangement of this gallery is an example of the intense love of art in Russia. No other gallery in the world has so lively a touch, so little the atmosphere of a museum, although it is not a gallery for modern art. The building itself is flooded with light, the walls are not overcrowded, and the rooms are warmed by the wonderful colors of lapis lazuli and malachite.

The official who guarded the treasures of the crown solemnly opened the door to this sanctuary; but as it was nearly dinner-time, he left the foreigner in the care of the general, who promised to deliver the key at the office when the visit was ended. In the quiet of this high-ceiled room, which opens on the Neva, the setting sun sent red and gold beams over all the jewels and precious treasures. It was like the revival of a childhood dream, in which the chairs were of gold and the floors of diamonds. It is amazing how little the Hermitage, with its priceless collections, was watched when compared with an empty imperial palace. But there was always a

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certain unconcern regarding things; the watching was concentrated on the person of the czar.

Among the royal wonders of the Winter Palace, suddenly they came upon a little model of a new military bridge, with all the minutest details reproduced. The general swore at this open display of military secrets, and severely rebuked the officer on duty, who could not explain why the model had been left there. Only a few days before the commission had shown it to the Grand Duke Nicholas, and probably it had been forgotten. The general put it in a box and carried it to the war ministry, where he left it with a responsible officer. He explained that he did not believe that the model had been forgotten. It was more likely that a rascally official wanted to show the model, which was of great military importance, to a spy, by whom he would be highly rewarded. And the Winter Palace, deserted in summer, was a favorable place for such an undertaking.

When the summer sun sets, Petrograd is wrapped for an hour in a dense veil of warmth and humidity, which is very depressing, as not a breath of wind blows. The general, after

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having changed his uniform for a khaki blouse and a light cap, directed his patient coachman to the islands in the Neva, where one of his friends, a high aristocrat, was expecting him to dinner. A telephone-call was sufficient to announce a foreign friend. The islands are in a swampy stretch of the river that has been partly drained. There are summer houses and palaces, areas of land planted in the time of Peter the Great, blossoming shrubs, green lawns, and white castles, all very fascinating in the evening dusk. Saluted by two sentinels, the coach drove through the maple-lined alley to the high-columned house. The family was assembled in the cool hall with several invited guests, all informally smoking cigarettes and drinking cold tea even before dinner.

The host, a minister, welcomed the foreigner so heartily, and his wife had so many questions to ask the traveler, that he had no chance to satisfy his own curiosity. This vivacious hospitality, which focuses all interest on the guest, is naturally the method which prevents the foreigner from getting into the intimate life of the Russian. Informality becomes stereotyped, and

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the foreigner who dines, sups, and takes part in many amusements for weeks or months suddenly discovers that he is never taken into the confidence of the family. It is very significant that Russian women never gossip about one another. Tragedies that may happen among them are treated seriously and with delicacy and never as a scandal; the sincerity of the Russians is too great, and they do not call what is destiny or temperament immorality. They are never ashamed of their tragedies, their unhappiness, and among themselves they speak of the last consequences of a tragedy bravely and frankly. The intensity of feeling in Russian family life does not permit of little jealousies or suspicions. Without any hesitation sins are confessed, and it is rarely that parents abandon unhappy children. In many cases in former Russia whole families were brought to misery by the anarchistic tendencies of one member. There is a wonderful tie, without narrow-minded despotism, between daughters and sons and their fathers and mothers. A great freedom of spirit prevails everywhere. Conversation flows unhampered by hypocrisy over the widest range of subjects, and

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the grown-up daughters have their share in it. Russian women are never frivolous, and Russian mothers have a beautiful, warm dignity; they are always the best comrades of their husbands and their sons. It is not what they say that makes an impression on the foreigner; it is how they say it.

Finally, it is true that the members of a Russian family know much more about their guest than the guest knows about them. There are so many differences in every-day habits that, fascinated by the strange color, the traveler often forgets the individual person in the impression as a whole. In the absolute informality it seems as if Russian servants are accustomed to guests, and therefore the foreigner feels that there are no embarrassing extras for him. There are, too, always touching little attentions. "We noticed that you preferred this dish," the host may say, "or this entertainment." He sends a box of candies or cigarettes which the guest has chosen among others, or he bestows the favorite flowers. In any case, there is always a surprise for the guest, and, amazingly, it is just the thing he likes best.

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Russian ladies seldom take part at the *zakoustkas* and vodka served at a sideboard, sometimes in another room. They have excellent things to eat, but they drink only in special cases, and then the preference is for champagne. The Russian lady rarely drinks, and it is not usual for her to smoke. It is understood that the men may smoke their cigarettes during the meal. Russian conversation is a source of ever-flowing interest. It may begin with every-day events and end in the depths of abstract philosophy. Russian poets voice the expression of the people and absolutely without exaggeration. Their deep knowledge of art and science, their never-satisfied curiosity, expel from life all banality. Life to them is the great mystery; nothing is commonplace. Even their debauches are of an extraordinary intensity.

After dinner a troika party is arranged. The silence and fresh air afford relaxation and prepare for the new and interesting pleasures to come. The troikas speed noiselessly through alleys on the banks of the Neva, through poor quarters, over big stones to other islands, where there is a stop before a summer variety show, a

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huge garden with cabarets in the open air, light-opera, prize-fighters, and other attractions. There are crowds inside, and the many outside who are peeping in are laughingly accepted and never chased away. It is very democratic, this autocratic Russia. When ladies are in the party, private boxes are preferred. Supper with champagne is served, and a little private dance may be arranged. After all, the chief entertainment is when the Gipsies are let in. It is not a real party without them. This Russian fad is not at first understandable to the foreigner. To him Gipsies would mean a fantastic group of strange beauties and black-haired men in theatrical costumes. Instead, middle-aged, or perhaps young women, in untidy clothing, sleepy and apathetic, slouch in. One of the principal singers has a bad toothache, and her face is wrapped in a white handkerchief. The men are common-looking and, on the whole, rather repulsive.

But Russian society cordially greeted them, and was sympathetic with the woman who had toothache and grateful that she appeared despite the pain. The Gipsies sat in a circle. The gen-

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eral offered several of them, with whom he talked, champagne, which they took, and drank slowly to the general's health. Then they began to sing. It was like opium, a warm, warm melody repeated and taken up by the chorus until the woman with the toothache came in. Her voice was as if heavy drops of a sweet, intoxicating wine were changed into sounds. The ear became drunk, the melody passing from the ear to the mind, and singing it into complete forgetfulness. It is the highest degree of intoxication, the most dangerous, this drunkenness caused by human voices, and it frequently happens that men give up life and life's duties, family and money, to live among the Gipsies, to sing with them, and to have them sing their songs. Again a Russian mystery. The foreigner takes away an impression of a terrible hypnotic force, which has a destroying attraction for Russians.

It was daylight when the general's sleeping coachman was whistled for, and as the morning air was chilly, the party drove to a café at the point of the island from which the view of the Baltic Sea, at the mouth of the Neva, was resplendent in the golden light of the warming sun.

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The morning hours do not count in the life of a Russian, his activity beginning after luncheon. Officials are rarely to be seen before noon. Even if their nights are not passed in cabarets, they never go to bed before two o'clock in the morning. It is the custom to receive visitors after midnight, and many ladies never see the natural light for a whole winter.

With great pride the general showed the foreigner the imperial library. It was amazing that even in summer, with the schools closed, the library was a lively place. The Russian swallows books. He is eager to instruct himself thoroughly about everything in which he is interested. He never lives on the surface of things, and he would never be satisfied to work for his daily bread only, to have no hours in which to live his own life, his own joys. It is astonishing that in the moment when a Russian is first able to read he understands everything, that the faculty of knowing existed before the mind was trained. This is the most promising thing about the Russian people, but it is also the most perilous, because when the Russian finds printed what he thinks about life's incompleteness it makes him

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unhappy and melancholy. Nowhere else are people so life-denying as in Russia. The question "Why?" is put and discussed by the most simple persons. But nowhere else are life-bringing ideas so wonderfully understood as in Russia, and a Russian may live in a trance over a new thought. A Russian never will discuss business affairs after the few office hours necessary for them; business is a duty that he gets rid of as soon as possible. There are so many delightful things waiting for his mind that he would not for the world burden his spirit with too much work. This is the reason why negotiations are either hastily closed or are drawn out for a month or two or drop into oblivion. The Russian's imagination must be kept vividly alive in all business affairs.

A decision to undertake a journey cannot be left to the last moment, because express tickets are not to be had at railway stations. Tickets must be obtained in advance, for they are given out carefully and are numbered, like American parlor-car tickets. No Russian can endure being crowded on a train. If he pays to travel first-class, he must be left alone. Russian cars

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have many small compartments, each one arranged for two persons. Such a compartment is like a little salon, and is always gay with flowers and cushions. It is a pleasure to travel for days in Russia. There is a feeling of comfort and security. The trains never rush at a dizzying speed; nowhere could it be more comfortable to sleep than in a Russian sleeping-car.

Cosmopolitan Russia ends in Moscow. Even the big hotels cannot be maintained at the modern European standard of Petrograd. They cannot be kept clean. The Russian traveler does not concern himself with sanitary conditions; he detests discomfort and prescribed rules. Rules in Russia are always to be circumvented. If a foreigner in Moscow is not the guest of a family, the old-fashioned Russian hotels are to be preferred to the modern ones. Bath-rooms are not numerous, for the Russians have their famous public baths, the steam baths, which no Russian would fail to visit at least once a week.

Life in Moscow is very stirring. No definite office hours are observed. Business is transacted in European-looking offices, which always belong to foreign representatives, or in the back yards

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of houses, in little rooms lighted by small lamps, where the samovar is boiling, and where the real merchants sit at a table drinking tea, smoking, and sometimes discussing large affairs. Then there are the big Russian restaurants, where men sit about the whole day, closing deals between meals, and leaving only to go to another restaurant. Around the historic Kreml are the principal stores, in dark houses, dark courtyards, in dark and dirty streets. Everything that is modern disturbs Moscow. The new department stores are hideous and garish in comparison with the individual, elegant shops where time and attention is given to each buyer and where arm-chairs invite customers to stay on for hours. A great modiste never would keep a lady without serving the usual glass of tea, and, to make it easy and pleasant to buy things, milliners send to the houses many hats from which to make a choice.

In Moscow the private residences of the aristocrats and rich merchants are like realized tales of a vanished splendor. The Russian delights in velvets, brocades, carpets, and couches. No one could be more conservative in his taste and

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his living, no one more erratic in his spiritual life. He has an indefatigable desire to pierce life's mystery, its joys, and its distresses. He despises all earthly needs in the midst of Oriental luxuries. When new Russia is touched by the naturally growing servant problem, there will be another revolution. The Russian will never have his life changed; that life he considers his own.

Moscow is a vivid picture of the Russian, the visible contradiction of what he aspires to and what he loves. In him an absolute satisfaction with conditions is unthinkable. Even though he may have dreamed of the change for years, the revolution came too suddenly for him, and while he will admire its achievements, and with it himself for having had the wonderful energy to bring about what he had talked of for more than a century—freedom, he will look around timidly and ask himself what this freedom is. When the many personal restrictions that freedom demands are placed upon him, when his life is exposed as in a mirror, he will never live up to this freedom.

When traveling from Moscow to the interior of Russia, the modern man, used to comfort, must absolutely resign himself to privations. If

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he is fortunate, he may be sent from one family to another, where he will be received with a hospitality warming to his heart and soul; but where he will be dismissed after a while with the same amount of joy that greeted him. The Russian is afraid of foreigners and their criticisms; hosts and servants live in a certain tension under the eyes of strangers. Of course the hosts are so amiable that guests would be the last to be aware of the strain, but when a Russian says some day, "Dear friend, you should not spend your precious time with us humble and boring people," then it is high time to leave the place. Sometimes it happens that the stranger, accepted at first with secret sighs, but after a time regarded without suspicion, becomes so attracted by real Russian life that he would stay always. This would be accepted by a Russian, who would never ask such a friend, "Why are you not attending to your business?" or say, "We can not keep you forever." The stranger becomes absolutely a member of the family, sharing wealth, joys, and griefs, and in nearly every Russian household is to be found such an intruder, who has entered this life of insouciance, this life of long days and long

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nights, this life of sociability, where friendships are not knotted and unknotted in a few weeks. "This is my brother," the Russian will say, and the foreigner will find out that he, once a stranger, has become the man's brother because of an affinity of souls stronger than blood ties. Or a foreigner might begin to discuss his host's hobby, philosophy, and they would continue days and days, then weeks, months, and years, and it would be natural that the arguing would end longing, but not the courage to live up to.

If the traveler in Russia would go not only with a guide-book in his hands, but with an awakened soul, he would discover many human desires realized for which other countries have a longing, but not the courage to live up to.

On the way to southern Russia it is worth while to stop in the university town of Charkow, an old town with frightful pavements and so-called "Grand" hotels, where the doors do not close, and one has to push trunks against them to keep the rooms from being invaded by late-comers with confused senses, where the water does not run, where the bed-springs slip cogs and drop the happy sleeper to the floor, where innum-

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erable fleas and flies drive one almost to suicide, and where, despite all these things, the traveler enjoys the spirited people, with their eagerness for humanity and progress.

Nature had somewhat neglected Charkow, and no trees gave shade for the hot months; but a park of many thousand acres was made by the simple method of making the school-children plant trees twice a year, each little boy and girl tending his or her special tree. Then another generation planted new trees beside the old ones of their fathers and mothers. In the afternoon and evening the people go to the park, really their park, and each greets his tree or his shrub or his flower-bed. In this simple way is shown the Russian character, its great simplicity, its patience.

Russians never can understand why foreigners care to travel through Russia for pleasure, because the Russian himself does not travel much in his own country; he prefers to take his pleasure-trips in other countries, where he has more comfort for less money. But he is proud of his railway trains, and he is right. Nothing

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could be more comfortable or more beautiful than the Caucasian Express, the White Express, as it is called. The cars are finished in bird's-eye maple, the seats being covered with light gray, protected in summer with white linen. This train takes the traveler first to the Caucasian watering-resorts. Very elegant, very lively, and wonderfully favored by nature are these little places among the harsh mountains. The hotels, first class according to Russian ideas, are very expensive, and the pleasures and the night life are healthful for Russians who live more than three parts of the year on remote estates. The waters of Kislavodsk are nearly as efficacious as those of Vichy and Saratoga; but Kislavodsk was so gay and colorful that sick folk were made to feel more or less like intruders who disturbed the joyful picture. The extravagant luxury of the ladies was most amazing and amusing. They promenaded to their morning baths in evening clothes and jewels, and the men danced in raw silk suits or white flannels in the evening.

The landed aristocracy took their débutante daughters to Kislavodsk, and after the season

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many brilliant officers of the Caucasian and Don regiments went back to their garrisons with young brides and their debts paid.

From Kislavodsk the wonderful express brings the traveler easily to Tiflis, that strange city, so European and yet so Asiatic. What Tiflis is or ever will be has nothing to do with changes in politics or government. It is like a little kingdom by itself; it is something of a real kingdom, a wild kingdom where every man can be a king. The Caucasians are the best specimens of mankind, the men and women royally tall and slender and seignior-like. They look like people just from the hand of the Creator. The Caucasians are wild, but noble. They are naïve and strong, and they have a feeling of contempt for ugly, stooping people. Tiflis itself, in the nacreous light of the mountains, often appears unreal, and to ride on horseback through the mountains and the high plains, where all the petty habits of culture are abandoned, and where a fresh spring at which to wash the face and hands is all of comfort, is wonderfully reviving, for one feels thoroughly cleansed in the rippling wind and the crisping air. For days one might



MOSCOW
View of the Kremlin and the West Church, called the "Artichoke" Church

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live on bread and milk and cheese. Nature alone makes one happy. If one is escorted and protected, the mountain highwaymen, who are princes, send the traveler on from one to another, and everywhere he is received with the hospitality of Bible times.

From Tiflis the traveler would take the train to the Black Sea and the Crimea, the sub-tropic portion of Russia. In the autumn the Crimea looks like the dreamed-of fruit gardens of romance. The people have the languid laziness that characterizes a country where sun and earth are the gardeners. In spring Livadia and Yalta have been the imperial Riviera, the seat of the high aristocracy, and very exclusive.

Unchanged for centuries flows the broad, majestic Volga in her many-hundred-miles-long course, sending big boats from the south of Russia to the north. It is a many-weeks' trip, and the uniformity of the tranquil days submerges nervousness in the unbroken grandeur. The boat life is contemplative, with no rush, no hurry, no impatience. No one in haste would put his foot on a Volga boat, and no business man in Russia is ever in a hurry; he will be in time for

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the annual fair at Nijni-Novgorod, and hidden in the hold are the treasures he will exhibit there. They come from afar, those merchants; they come from the Persian border; they come from Manchuria. It is a solemn hour, the morning hour on the boat; the men pray, the Russian sailors sing their folk songs. It is another holy hour when the sun sets, when the boat moves toward the night, dividing the calm water with the rhythmic motion of its wheels. The days are enchanting in their monotony. Life on the boat is subdued. Many languages are spoken, but, with a kindly tact, voices never become loud or disturbing. Cities are passed, and travelers come and go without haste. Sometimes a boat lies at a pier for several hours, and the traveler is able to go on shore to catch glimpses of places entirely Russian. The stranger may have a letter to a hospitable family that may be waiting for the unknown foreigner who will be recognized immediately as a non-Russian. Samara is one of the largest cities that the boat passes. There the Transsiberian train brings Siberian merchants to the steamer. Samara is a vast place in a vast plain. Enormous Russian bazaars, which are

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built in quadrangles, with all sorts of shops outside as well as inside, have an Oriental touch without the Oriental noisiness. The Russians move with a silent poise, wait patiently, make their selections, and buy. Extremely interesting are the gold and silver shops, with their masses of silver and gold icons, the marvelously worked tea-glasses, and the enormous diamonds. It is the Russian's pride to buy for his wife the largest stones possible and many of them, and to have her travel with immense diamond ear-rings, chains, and bracelets. In the typical Russian restaurants, where the prosperous merchants eat and sit comfortably in their national blouses with their stout, bejeweled wives, contented with life, they pass hours over their meals, never speaking when consuming with great appetite masses of food that would satisfy other men for a week.

On the plains about Samara are raised the famous mares which supply the milk for the kumiss cure. Special establishments give opportunity for the treatment of tuberculosis and anemia. Samara was a regimental town. It will be emptied now, and what name will they give to the proud hussars of Alexandra Feodor-

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ovna, the black and silver uniformed regiment of the czarina?

At the time of the fair Nijni-Novgorod looks as if there were no original inhabitants at all. Private houses as well as the *gastinices* lodge the merchants. Russian hospitality never lets a foreigner suffer if he has been recommended by a friend. Rooms are reserved in the Convent of the Sisters of Saint Afrossinia. At the station small, high-wheeled *istvoschiks* are hired; on one trunks are fastened, on another, the traveler. That means that a cover of leather is strapped over the lap even when the weather is not rainy, to prevent the traveler from being lost *en route*, owing to the speed of the horse. The little carriage rocks behind the hurrying horse as it passes over sticks and stones, rolling from one side to another as if it were drunk; and despite the leather cover, the passenger must hold on with both hands not to be thrown from the seat. The little horse leaves the town behind and speeds over a road that looks like hardened waves. The air is freshened by a fine cooling breeze from the hills, over which the beams of evening red shine upon the golden cross of the monastery.

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Nijni-Novgorod is so filled with life through the six weeks of the big fair that, exhausted, it falls deeply asleep for the rest of the year, when the courtyards where the enormous quantities of goods have been shown are closed. In the innumerable little booths all the wonders of earth are assembled, from grains to Oriental pearls, from house-woven materials to Persian gold brocades, from the skin of calves to the noble furs of sable and silver fox, from the little nail to the pine wood, everything that mankind needs to live in or to be buried in. But the center of all this Oriental, cosmopolitan life is the Russian merchant, with his kindly poise, his patience, and his broad-minded dealing. He has no pettiness, he likes to live and to let live.

Nijni-Novgorod is another thing that will never be touched by politics or government. It will remain as it always has been, the unique mercantile center of Russia, which is a Russia of yesterday. And this Russia of yesterday should be the Russia of to-morrow, for it should not become the banal road of idle travelers, but always endure as the land which has to be discovered.

CHAPTER XII

RUSSIA OF TO-MORROW

YOUNG Russia has a tremendous task to justify her proud name of a democracy. Only with a clean conscience will she win the power to establish in Russia's heart faith in herself. She made her first steps into a world of blood and tears, and she must protect the early days of her childhood from the contradictions that brought about the death-sentence for old Russia. But while young Russia proclaimed freedom, she apparently continued and tolerated the policy of old Russia. She continued war, which is not the initial demand of a democracy. Democracy in Russia should have made her entrance as a constructive, and not as a destructive, power. This was not the fault of young Russia; it was the fault of old Russia, and to maintain her existence young Russia will be compelled to make promises the fulfilment of which will exhaust her tender youth.

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With a sparkling generosity the five granted all kinds of new wonders to the people, who looked bewildered on events so adventurous, so incredible, and could not comprehend why at the same time young Russia rushed her children into battles, into new miseries. If the five were so strong, so mighty; if they were to replace all that was yesterday imperative to the simple Russian mind; if they had the sincere conviction that old Russia was not the reality, that land and people had been held in the spell of a century-long dream, a dream of terrible nightmares; if the morning red of a great truth was so flaming as to awaken the last poor illiterate, why should the people open their eyes to see only a continuation of the dream?

The people had to be avenged. This was the first great idea, and it would have been a strong idea if, after the first intoxication of revolt there could have followed the supreme redeeming act of peace.

The great sensation in the Russian spring festival, beginning with the arrest and the dismissal of the czar and with the arrest of the czar's creatures,—excellencies having been treated as

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common criminals,—the exciting holiday of the brief elementary revolution is past. The people have interred the victims of young Russia with the most impressive pomp. The first trains from Siberia have come in, and all the emotions that accompanied the men and women when they marched away chained have been revived by their return. The people, now dull, are expecting other things to happen. They have bread and clothing. They have been given money and many promises. But the people, stirred up, have lost their ancient patience, which was like a halo around their heads. They are eager and demanding; they are beginning to reflect; they enjoy the new right to draw conclusions.

The czar, they reason, was sent away, and all of us have freedom to do as we like. What is freedom which is bestowed on the last muzhik and taken away from the czar? Perhaps the czar had too much freedom. And the men who freed us, have they also the right to dictate to us? What really has changed? Those who ruled Russia for hundreds of years, and who, despite all the maledictions, made a great Russia and brought out all the immense resources of men and

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earth, were they not Russian? Was not the czar a Russian? Those who punished the czar, who still fill the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, the lugubrious memorial of darkest Russia, are they the Russians of to-morrow?

It was perhaps right that the people should show the czar that God has given them the power to disgrace a sovereign who did not march toward the light, but are those five, the rulers of Russia, marching toward the light? Why are they the rulers of to-morrow when still afraid of the Russia of yesterday? Otherwise the czar would have freedom to go wherever he wants to go.

The Russian people slept. From time to time they rubbed their sleepy eyes, blinked into the world, and noticed something different to them. Yes, one day they had more than their grandfathers; they were free to work or to starve. They were grateful. Not all of them suffered from the suppression of free speech; there were many among them who could not read and write. They knew only that they lived in a world of limitations. They knew that there are strict laws in nature for animals, and that a man should not revolt against rules that God has dictated

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and that men have only interpreted. And when they were unhappy or discontented they could accuse the man who interpreted God's laws for them. They could accuse the czar, and they could hope that some day God would inspire the czar to goodness. So they lived between hope and fear.

Provisional government is what the people will not understand. It is vague to them; democracy is vague to them. They will go about discussing democracy, and will try to find out what that great word really means. Some of them have been in America; some of them are still there. Democracy is the expression of the power the people have. They have not a czar in America; they have a President. He is like a czar, and yet he is not. He is not the father of his people. He is not loved; he is not hated. He is the head of a great business. Russians can not grasp the idea that the state is a tremendous business proposition. They are old fashioned, and think there must be some superhuman being who knows all about the people, the omnipotent one who rewards and who punishes. The Russian mind is strongly directed to the unit, to the one of the

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great number, which is responsible for the little numbers that form the big figures. They must have this one. The czar had not a position; he had a mission. But a President—how can he be popular, and how can people believe in his final decision, when before his election they stripped him of all his good qualities, because a part of the people belonged to a political party that favored another man? And how is it possible, so the Russian ponders, to look up to a man who was not elected because he was the wisest and strongest, but because the party who elected him was stronger, had more money, or had better fighters? The President's own party has to pull together the stripped figure and show his capacity as a whole. Each new figurehead must first struggle against all kinds of prejudices among the people who accepted him or rejected him. When finally he has begun to win confidence, to be a man of his own personality, of his own color, when he has ceased to be a figurehead, the battles begin again for a new man. And this they call democracy. This might be possible for a country like America, where the people were first before they had their rulers, where the people settled from old

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countries from which they brought knowledge of everything that history taught them. The settlement of America began only when Russia still had her czar.

It is very difficult to take away from the Russian the idea that the czar was the man next to God, that he had to be crowned with a heavy diadem of gold and costly stones, that he had to be draped in a purple robe bordered with ermine, that splendor distinguishes him from other mortals. When this man, sometimes kind and generous, stepped down from his golden throne and condescended to the people, great miracles were achieved; victories were won where the czar showed himself. The Russians worshiped this mysterious force, and that made of them the devoted, the imaginative, the patient people.

The Russian people look to-day on the five heroes of the revolution as the link that connects the Russia of yesterday with the Russia of to-morrow. They have a childlike confidence in those five. They see in them their own force reflected, a force never known before, and they accept the five as those who will prepare young Russia for to-morrow.

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The Russians would not talk of a republic. They were afraid before this denial of their holiest convictions. The five who first headed the new Government were wise enough to call themselves "provisional." They know why. These rulers will have to answer, and they will disappoint the people, whom they hurried into tremendous changes, from whom they took away the illusion that beyond enslavement exists a contentment on earth. As a substitute for the czar the five must provide for to-morrow an equal grandeur for the people's soul, which still is the Russian soul that they would not sacrifice for the comfort of the body. The meaning of the Russia of to-morrow for the people can be felt only through a deep knowledge of the Russian character.

The Russian as an individual man did not bother much about the blessings that the five bestowed first so liberally. Personally he had nothing to do with the question of religious freedom. If sects appeared or disappeared, that was merely a matter of a few who fanatically believed in a new Messiah. The Russian knew that every one has to suffer for his faith, and a

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faith would not be worth while if there was no suffering for it. Christ died for mankind. Christ was the great martyr. The man who preaches a new faith must know that he, also, will be a martyr some day; that belongs to his holy vocation. If a man who proclaims a new faith has not the courage to die for that faith, then the faith is wrong. The Russian Church did not want the sectarians; she did not want the Jews, who are a strong race, a convincing race, a race that has had its martyrs, which still has its martyrs. In the Russian people is a holy respect for everything that has suffered for a conviction, and if they object to the Jews as a race, they respect their faith.

The Russia of to-morrow means more for the Russian than political freedom. Even in the darkest days of old Russia the human being felt, as nowhere else, rest for the soul. Nothing was ridiculed, neither imagination nor utopianism. The soul could expand; it could laugh and cry. Human sins met nowhere else such kindly, sympathetic understanding. Nowhere else was there such fertile earth for fantastic ideas. Freedom for Russia means more than the simple liberties

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which are permitted in other democracies, where, for utilitarian reasons, the people are able to rule themselves, where the people recognize restrictions which are necessary for maintaining public order, and where the exceptional cases are punished. In Russia are too many exceptions, and the first disappointment for the Russians will come through the simple laws to which every man has to submit for the sake of the country.

There will be many little revolutions growing out of the varying opinions of what freedom means. In Russia live many persons who never have been connected with political movements. These will demand other reforms, a different sort of freedom. The Slavic fantasy is so extensive that every man in Russia has his own dream, which he will want fulfilled, and every man will rush to the new rulers to make his own demands. When the busy ministers will not have special time for him, the Russian will go back home to tell his fellow-men that such a thing as freedom does not exist, and that he prefers to be ruled by a czar, who had a regular cabinet, with many men employed to listen to petitions, rather than to be

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snubbed by men of the people who think themselves the new autocrats.

It is a fact that the cabinet of the czars at which petitions were received was like a little government of itself. Catharine the Great desired to meet all petitioners, to look into demands personally, and to grant them or to explain why they could not be granted. She had to give up this plan, and she appointed three high officials as state secretaries to communicate with petitioners "kindly, patiently, indulgently"; but sealed letters addressed privately and confidentially to "His Majesty's own hand" reached the sovereign without intervention.

Czar Paul tried to imitate Catharine and made every effort to come into contact with the people, who went to the palace. To facilitate the receiving of petitions, a large iron box painted yellow was attached to one of the windows on the ground floor of the Winter Palace in Petrograd. This box had to be opened by the state secretary and the contents submitted to the czar. Some petitions were so absurd that they were partly torn and returned through the postoffice. Others were published in the St. Petersburg "Gazette,"

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with the reasons for refusal. In 1799 this same Czar Paul was so eager to meet all demands from his people that he issued a ukase forbidding the presentation of unreasonable requests; but it gradually became impossible to prolong the box method of communication.

In the time of Alexander I a commission of appeals was established, and in the time of Czar Nicholas the court of petitions was reorganized, more or less on the basis upon which it had existed under the last Czar Nicholas II, the members being appointed by the czar himself. To their former duties were added others relating to orphans and lunatics. By the wish of his Majesty the reasons for refusals to grant favors were sometimes given, but this could not always be observed. Czar Nicholas II gave orders to enlarge the court's sphere of work by accepting appeals to imperial mercy for criminal charges and misdemeanors.

In 1907, an average year, 65,375 petitions went through this court, and of this great number 64,174 were fortunate enough to be attended to without delay. As a rule 65,000 petitions were presented annually. Imperial benevolence

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toward children reached 10,000 cases a year.

This court of petitions will cease to exist, and the people will expect every one of the provisional rulers to confer personally with the petitioners. The first discontent will be awakened. What the Russians endured from the "Little Father" they will never accept from democratic rulers. And the people will demand more and more, believing that nothing can be refused them. The people have been promised freedom, and freedom is an elastic word. The people will take their petitions to the provisional Government, and all refusals will be regarded as a terrible injustice. This democratic Government sits among the people, and people must be heard. Freedom has rung in the last little village of Russia, and men and women are on their way, with hopes of acquiring more sheep or land from this wonder of democratic Government, an institution which had the muscles of a giant and was forceful enough to turn over the throne. They think that now the five are only waiting to listen to their desires, and to do kind things for the mothers and fathers whose children are still fight-

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ing, still dying. But they will discover that in the consideration of their demands nothing has changed, that this provisional Government is an invisible body which cannot be touched and which is impersonal. They will be received by some tired, busy clerk and they will see their petition disappear into a desk. They will go back shaking their heads and not understanding at all why a democracy should be better for Russia. The democratic leaders will sigh more heavily under the demands of the people than the people sighed under their oppressors.

The Russians dream now of electing a czar by the grace of the people, a czar who will unite in his person all the qualities scattered among the members of the body called the provisional Government. The provisional Government does not impose the idea of a reverent feeling of remoteness. The Russians cannot see that they are bound now to help their rulers instead of hampering them. They cannot see this, because "ruler" is a higher idea for them, an idea which wears a crown, which is specially and personally helped by God. The excuse for the delay of affairs which are important to the individual man has

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vanished; the people want to have their own, their private griefs considered first, and every one of them will revolt against neglect. For what is a people's Government when the poor people come last?

In crown and ermine was a magic spell that banished criticism, and the monarchical idea must be forever removed from the people's hearts. It is like in the old song of mother's love for her erring child. When the child has torn out the mother's heart, which rolls on the floor, the mother's dying voice murmurs: "Take care, my child, not to fall over my heart and hurt yourself."

With the hymns of freedom in Russia, tears were shed for the czar and, dethroning him, they expected to proclaim the czarevitch enthusiastically. But the five forced the czar to abdicate for himself and for the czarevitch, the pretext to keep the dynasty being merely an act of policy.

Nothing was brought before the people concerning those last happenings between the czar and the representatives of the Duma, who, one morning, manifested themselves as rulers to the

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surprise of the people. "God has illuminated these men," the people said as they prayed that injustice in Russia would end. "They will sit at the right of the czar, and will restore Russia's glory to the inner and the outer world, and the czar will make a new oath."

The world outside of Russia must not have the illusion that the Russian democracy is settled. How should a people so long mysterious as a whole suddenly be awakened to new ideas, though the Russian has not changed? The world outside of Russia rejoiced at the victory of the democracy, and did not realize what the Russians might suffer in the exposure of their young helplessness. They always belonged to the democracy of genius, which made them all equal before the great world spirit. The democracy applicable to others will make of them dull, simple people, with stomachs satisfied, and with their miseries disclosed through health departments. Charitable women will go among them and will force them to become happy.

Old Russia will change from the mysterious conditions of hunger and fear to the banal certainty of a people who will recognize business

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opportunities. Old characteristics of the primitive, the strange Russia will be first sacrificed to a practical spirit, and old Russia will be buried and burned and reconstructed into sky-scrapers, into factories. The people will forget the songs of their oppression; they will become fat and banal. They will read and write, and will quote the wisdom of the newspapers instead of their old sayings and prophecies. They will become a political people, with all the prosaic horrors of elections, and small ambitions will take the place of cruel grandeurs. Heroism will be eliminated; there will be no longer risk of life or deportation, no longer the dream-like secret meetings. The Russians were the wonder-people who thought they had to wait for something marvelous, great, and new, an earthly heaven. They had fought for life, not only for suffrage and imagined splendors. The people were serfs, and their souls had wings; the suppressed word had much more to say than unrestrained speech, and hopes were more beautiful than realizations.

The Russian suddenly will have to close his mind to spiritual miracles and to open it to the day's necessities. He will no longer have time

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to discuss the affairs of souls and their beatitudes; he will discuss new corporations. He will live much faster, and the charm of the long, long days, which began only at noon and ended when the next morning dawned, will disappear. There will be no longer many, many holy days, with the interruption of church services, for the saints never have had room in the pragmatism of a democracy. Gaiety and life of individuality will change into the hypocrisy of civilized habits. Souls will be emptied, and art will be submerged by inventions of practical value. A nation of dreamers and philosophers will become bathed, clean-shaved Russian citizens.

Beneath all that was Russian to the outer world slumbers quite another Russia, not the barbaric Russia, not the anarchistic, nihilistic Russia, not the Russia known to-day,—the confused people who blindly follow the strongest or run in wild disorder in another direction,—but a Russia that is revealed only to those who know her, who love her so greatly that they would not die for her, but would live for her; a Russia young, emanating, above democracy and autocracy; with a force too overwhelming to be freed, a force that

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would conquer the whole world, a force that must be tamed at any cost until Russian ideals, through education, enter into the age of ripeness and become like a precious wine, golden, heavy, and sweet, a wonder drink for all mankind. This is the Russia of to-morrow.

THE END

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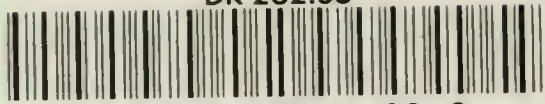


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